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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Reverend Robert Hughes, Broadway Presbyterian Church, Sedalia, Missouri, offered the following prayer:

Awesome and merciful God, we thank You that we can approach You directly in prayer, fully aware that prayer is not a shield protecting us from all evil but, rather, a reminder, first and foremost, that You alone are God, creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all, and we are not.

Gracious Lord, in ancient times King Solomon asked only for wisdom, not fame, fortune, or influence. Instead, he longed for godly wisdom. Whether as parent, teacher, minister, elected official, or in any other position of leadership, help us to lead with godly wisdom.

Heavenly God, as I proclaim Your threefold unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, individual, yet eternally united as one God, I pray that this Nation, the United States, be also unified, respecting and valuing the individual, yet eternally united as one nation, under God, indivisible. It is in Your name, I pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND ROBERT HUGHES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Reverend Robert Hughes of Sedalia, Missouri, for his leadership in the faith community.

After beginning his career in film and television, working for media companies like Disney and National Geographic, Reverend Hughes left show business to do God's business. He entered the ministry, which led him to Sedalia, in Missouri's Fourth Congressional District, where he serves as the pastor at Broadway Presbyterian Church.

Reverend Hughes is well loved by the members of his congregation, and he uses his time and talents to energize others about God's Word. It was my honor to recommend him as guest chaplain to lead the House in prayer this morning.

Reverend Hughes, thank you for your devotion to your community and congregation and for bringing inspiration and encouragement to those you serve. May God bless everything you set your hand to. Your service to God and your church is appreciated.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The Chair will entertain up to five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD HUNTER

(Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the bravery of one of my constituents and an American hero, Staff Sergeant Richard Hunter. Staff Sergeant Hunter was recently awarded the Air Force Cross in recognition of his outstanding courage in the line of duty.

Staff Sergeant Hunter was deployed to Kunduz province, Afghanistan, as part of the U.S. Army Special Forces team. On November 2, 2016, his team found themselves under heavy machine-gun fire from insurgents. Despite the barrage of enemy fire, Hunter charged forward to shield the wounded and, ultimately, repelled the enemy's encroachment. He initiated the launch of the quick reaction force and casualty airlift for wounded members in his group.

After discovering an injured fellow Special Force soldier, Hunter dragged him 30 meters to safety with one hand, while he directed radio airstrikes with his other. When they fell under fire once again, Hunter eliminated the threat, and helped load the wounded into a helicopter to be evacuated. In total, Staff Sergeant Hunter's actions that day eliminated 27 enemy forces and saved his team.

For these measures of extraordinary bravery in the most dire of circumstances, Staff Sergeant Richard Hunter earned the Air Force Cross award. Without his help, many American servicemembers surely would have been lost that day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the heroic actions of Staff Sergeant Richard Hunter, a true American hero.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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H9379

AMERICANS DESERVE BIPARTISAN TAX REFORM

(Mr. CARBAJAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, the tax bill put forth today by congressional Republicans is a gift to the wealthiest 1 percent and multinational corporations at the expense of our students, homeowners, and seniors.

It eliminates critical deductions that help central coast families, including deductions for State and local taxes, mortgage interest, student loans, and medical expenses.

With wildfire season in California growing longer each year, this bill callously eliminates tax relief for personal casualty losses resulting from wildfires as well as earthquakes. In fact, this bill would raise taxes on 36 million working and middle class taxpayers by an average of \$1,130 a year.

With a national debt that has now surpassed \$20 trillion, the American people cannot afford this tax bill that adds \$1.5 trillion to the deficit and leaves our children stuck with the bill. Americans deserve bipartisan tax reform that simplifies our Tax Code and puts the middle class first.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, hard-working families in Michigan have been squeezed for far too long under our broken Tax Code. Wages aren't going up, yet the cost of living keeps getting more expensive.

We developed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act with those low- and middle-income families in mind. They need a break.

For folks in Michigan, in Monroe, Jackson, Charlotte, and all across my district, this tax cut plan means bigger paychecks and more money in their pocket. At every income level, people will see meaningful tax relief.

Our plan doubles the standard deduction and increases the child tax credit to help with the costs of raising a family. It also eases the tax burden on small businesses so they can give their workers a raise and create more jobs in the community. It brings back jobs from overseas and incentivizes job creators to expand and hire here at home.

Mr. Speaker, this is a progrowth and proworker plan. Let's pass it today and help the families we represent get the relief they need.

AMERICANS DESERVE A BETTER DEAL

(Mr. BROWN of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, the American people do not support

the GOP tax plan being considered today.

After promising a simple and fair tax system, Republicans offer a complicated mess. Their tax plan picks winners: the rich, and big corporations, getting nearly \$1 trillion in tax cuts. They create losers, like teachers, seniors, students, people with disabilities, and working families who will pay more.

This GOP tax scam also targets our Nation's veterans. More than 300,000 veterans have benefited from the work opportunity tax credit, most of whom served after 9/11. Yet this bill eliminates the tax credit and abandons our servicemembers when they return home and transition to civilian life.

Today, one of every three veterans is underemployed, and 1.8 million veterans are stuck in low-wage jobs. Every single veteran should be able to get a family-supporting job at home after serving our Nation. This tax bill asks our veterans and their families to again sacrifice, this time so billionaires and big corporations get a huge tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, veterans deserve a better deal and so do American working families.

NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I have supported and continue to support increased Federal funding for the promising research going on at the National Institutes of Health in order to encourage more progress addressing the Alzheimer's situation.

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. There are an estimated 5.5 million Americans living with this debilitating disease, and we know it often goes unreported or undiagnosed.

This issue is near and dear to my heart because it has touched my own family, and I have seen firsthand the challenges of supporting a loved one battling the disease. I have been frustrated by the lack of progress.

Again, Mr. Speaker, together, we will improve the quality of life for those who are suffering and work toward finding a cure. We must have funding for the NIH to get this done.

NATIONAL PARKS ARE FOR EVERYONE

(Mr. RUIZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the administration's proposed national parks entrance fee hike from \$25 to \$70 per vehicle, which will prohibit many American families from enjoying these beautiful sites.

Joshua Tree National Park in my district welcomes as many as 2.5 mil-

lion visitors each year, contributing \$128 million to our local economy. It is a haven for so many: local veterans find solace and healing in the quiet of nature; children experience the beauty of their first hike; visitors come to love the grandeur and the mystique of our desert when they come to stay in Joshua Tree; families bond over the lasting memories they make in the park.

Everyone, not just the rich, should have access to these incredible places. Working families are deserving of access to our national parks. Nearly tripling the price of entry means that many families will be priced out of visiting these parks, including many people in my district who live right next to Joshua Tree National Park.

Our national parks are not just only for the economically privileged. They are for we, the people, to enjoy.

RECOGNIZING THE BUCKS COUNTY OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Bucks County Opportunity Council, Community Action Agency, which serves low-income families throughout Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and its economic self-sufficiency program, which recently graduated its 300th family from poverty.

This individualized program works with families to end the cycle of poverty by building a plan of action and working with a coach to attain new training and education. To graduate, participants in the program must be free from welfare subsidies, have secured employment, live in safe and affordable housing, have access to safe and reliable transportation, maintain a balanced budget, and have a healthcare plan for their entire family.

Mr. Speaker, this program is working. Aside from the total number of graduates, last year's class of families have more than tripled their salaries. Moreover, in our community, every dollar invested nets nearly \$5 saved in cash welfare subsidies.

I am proud to stand with the Bucks County Opportunity Council in their mission to reduce poverty and partner with our community to promote economic self-sufficiency. Our community is a better place because of their work.

REPUBLICAN TAX SCAM

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will tell you that this tax scam bill will help ordinary people. As we New Yorkers say: "If you buy that one, I've got a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you."

This bill takes a wrecking ball to our middle class. It erases deductions that ordinary, working families count on to stay afloat. It raises taxes on 36 million middle class families.

By eliminating the medical expense deduction, this scam will force nearly half a million New Yorkers who already struggle with serious illnesses to dig into overstretched bank accounts just to pay their healthcare bills.

By gutting the student loan interest deduction, higher education will become even more expensive for 800,000 New York students. Graduate students will be taxed on tuition waivers.

I heard from one woman in my district, a recent Ph.D., who said she would have paid \$2,700 in income out of her pretax income of \$13,000.

The choice is clear. Vote "no." Reject this scam.

□ 0915

SUPPORT THE TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

For the first time since 1986, this is a real opportunity to challenge the status quo and simplify the Tax Code.

For the nearly 82 percent of taxpayers in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District who file jointly under the standard deduction, they are going to see that nearly doubled to \$24,000, up from \$12,700.

According to the IRS, 18 percent of taxpayers in the Fifth District of Pennsylvania choose to itemize their tax returns, averaging about \$21,000 in deductions. Doubling the standard deduction means that low- and middle-income families, who have been struggling for a long time, will see their tax burden lowered.

This proposal truly strives to help families keep more of their hard-earned paychecks. Today we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity that we cannot afford to pass up: more jobs, fair taxes, bigger paychecks.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve no less, and I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Wednesday, November 15, 2017, 1 hour 58½ minutes of debate remained on the bill.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) has 61 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) has 57½ minutes remaining.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), a key architect of the tax reform plan, a leader and a champion for new business investment.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Mr. Speaker, for years, the middle class has been saddled with a broken Tax Code and low wages. Small businesses have been crushed by overly complicated rules and a higher tax burden than corporations.

As a result, America has suffered from a self-inflicted uncompetitive Tax Code, lagging behind the rest of the world both in economic growth and job creation. Companies have fled for lower tax jurisdictions and more competitive business environments.

Since the 1986 Tax Reform Act was passed, Washington has continued to make the Tax Code longer and more complicated, adding special interest loopholes and industry-specific carve-outs back into the Code year after year.

This has allowed the Tax Code to dictate business decisions instead of letting businesses dictate business decisions.

For the first time in 31 years, we are wiping the Tax Code clean and replacing it with one that is fair and simpler for everyone.

For the better part of my career, I have advocated for a cash-flow tax system that would allow small businesses to expense 100 percent of their costs immediately. H.R. 1 contains an expensing provision that would give businesses the tremendous opportunity to reinvest, allowing them to grow their businesses and create jobs.

The impacts for the American economy would be huge. Small businesses across rural California, from the small family-owned farm to the neighborhood restaurant and any other entrepreneur, deserve a type of tax system that allows them to create jobs and be able to compete on an equal footing globally.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to just point out to those in the audience, those who are watching this, that today you are going to hear a lot about how Republicans are giving tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires.

Mr. Speaker, that is always what the left says about the Republicans. However, you will also hear a lot of talk about people who itemize and SALT deductions and how those are somehow increasing taxes on the middle class.

The reality of this, Mr. Speaker, is these deductions go to millionaires and billionaires. So for my friends on the left, you can't have it both ways. You can't claim that Republicans are giving tax cuts to millionaires and billion-

aires when you are attempting to keep the very tax cuts called SALT, State and local tax deductions, that go to millionaires and billionaires.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to take this opportunity to thank Chairman BRADY and all my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee. For years, we have been working on this legislation, but this is a historic moment. Congress has the opportunity to positively impact every American by reforming our Tax Code, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this is a historic moment, but, most importantly, it is a missed opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, we are taking the proposal of the Republican Party today and the financial architecture of our revenue system, based on their request, to the casino.

Their argument is premised on one thing today, and one thing only. Maybe. But what about maybe not?

This could have been done between the two parties, as we requested and wanted to do.

In 1986, 450 witnesses offered testimony on tax reform, thirty hearings were held, and the Secretary of the Treasury attended most of them. The two parties found commonality in reaching an accord that was well received by the American people.

What we are being asked to do here today is to raise taxes on 36 million middle class Americans. The previous speaker, my friend from California, a quarter of the households in his district claim the State and local tax deduction, with an average of \$10,000 per family. \$10,000. So they are going to tell you today that they are giving you this and they are giving you that.

Take a look at the distribution tables. That is the most certain opportunity for people to examine precisely what is in this legislation.

A gentleman earlier this morning was heralding Alzheimer's month. They give Alzheimer's a tax during Alzheimer's month. For those who stay together with loved ones for as long as they can, they need that deduction that is so important to keeping that family together.

This is the same old, same old. In 2001, tax cuts of \$1.3 trillion all premised on maybe we will have economic growth.

Remember the argument that tax cuts pay for themselves?

Well, they, today, call it dynamic scoring. Now we are being asked again to premise the argument on maybe there will be enough growth to generate some return on revenue.

In 2003, another \$1.3 trillion in terms of a tax cut was offered with no or slow economic growth.

And the granddaddy of them all, in 2005, how about repatriation?

Foreign earnings were brought back at 5¼ percent, all based upon the idea that there was going to be widespread broad-based hiring.

What did we discover in the aftermath of that?

Almost 20,000 layoffs in the weeks after it. The money was used for stock buybacks and dividends with no employment gains across the country.

They keep telling us: Well, you are going to get 3 percent, 4 percent, 5 percent, and the President says 6 percent growth.

I want to find that economist who says we are going to get 6 percent growth.

Most projections are that we are being asked here today to participate in the following, because this is the context of the argument this morning: They are borrowing \$2.3 trillion over 10 years for the purpose of giving a tax cut to people at the very top of our economic system.

We should be investing in human capital, community colleges, vocational education, internship programs, and aligning the American people with the skill sets that are necessary, as the Department of Labor reported this week, for the 6 million jobs that are available. That is the most gainful way to do long-term investment.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would note that a family of four in Massachusetts' First District will see a tax cut of nearly \$2,000 under this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS), one of our key leaders on the Ways and Means Committee who is really all in on growth and savings for America.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Mr. Speaker, as a CPA and a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, reforming our Tax Code has been a priority of mine during my entire service here in Congress.

Our current Tax Code is broken, and I have heard from thousands of Kansans in my district who are frustrated with the status quo.

This legislation will not only reform our broken Tax Code, but it will permanently lower rates for hardworking individuals, families, and businesses while retaining or expanding many popular provisions, such as the dependent care assistance program. It also includes strong safeguards that keep the wealthy from gaming the system in an effort to pay less than their fair share.

On average, this legislation will help provide tax relief for all income groups across the board. If you don't believe me, read the analysis from the Tax Foundation and the Joint Committee on Taxation. They agree.

While individuals and families receive a much-needed tax break, they will also notice that their wages are going up and more jobs are being created.

Just the other day, AT&T announced they will be making a substantial investment in the United States once we enact tax reform.

Folks are tired of the status quo. They are tired of a Tax Code that is confusing. Once figured out, you realize that it actually penalizes hard work and success.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act accomplishes our goals of ensuring that rates are cut for low- and middle-income Americans, simplifying the tax system and expanding American competition within the global economy.

This is a rare opportunity to enact the kind of legislation that our constituents need and deserve to grow the economy and put more money in the pockets of hardworking Kansans.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and the entire committee for their good work on this important legislation.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), who has a long and distinguished history in this Congress and as a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

□ 0930

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for all of his work he has done over the years.

The Republican tax bill is built on massive deception. The deception is that, as the Speaker put it: "The focus is on middle class tax relief." That is simply not true.

As the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation said, roughly one out of every four Americans with income between \$50,000 and \$100,000 would pay higher taxes in 2023, far overshadowing the \$1,000 or so for other families. In 2019, those earning over \$1 million would get an average tax cut of \$73,000.

Even as modified in last-minute desperation, the wealthiest would receive 90 percent of the new tax break for so-called passthrough income.

Another deception is that tax breaks pay for themselves. On this, some people may have been in the past fooled once, fewer twice, but none thrice.

A further deception is that exploding the deficit and national debt to \$1.7 trillion will disappear as it promotes growth. Not only is this a 180-degree Republican turn, but it threatens Medicare and other critical programs and will worsen the vast inequalities in income and wealth in America.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. In this case, Republican political necessity is the mother of desperation and deception.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have a note that the average family of four in Michigan's Ninth District will receive a tax cut of over \$1,700.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING), one of our key leaders on the Ways and Means Committee, who serves on the Tax Policy Subcommittee.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be here today to support this

historic bill that will put our economy back on the path to stable and sustained growth.

This bill finally levels the playing field and restores the global competitiveness of American businesses by moving to a territorial system. This key aspect of our bill removes the punitive barriers of the current worldwide system and allows companies to reinvest their overseas profits in America, without fear of getting hit with an excessive tax burden. This important change ensures that America remains the best place to start, grow, or invest in a business.

As companies begin to see the benefits of this new territorial system, I look forward to continuing to work with the chairman to explore ways to move toward a residency-based taxation system to ensure that American citizens have a level playing field around the globe as well.

I have heard from companies, American companies, that say as they expand their operations overseas, the Tax Code has made it prohibitive for them to hire Americans for these jobs. In fact, our current system of citizenship-based taxation makes Americans nearly 40 percent more expensive to employ overseas than their foreign counterparts.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman very much for his understanding of this issue and look forward to our continued work to ensure that talent, not tax burden, is the driving factor in the hiring decisions of multinational companies.

I am proud to support this bill. I look forward to it growing the economy and ensuring businesses of all sizes have the capital necessary to hire more employees, grow their operation, and give Americans the raise they deserve.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for his leadership on this issue, in particular, about international competitiveness for our workers. Residence-based taxation is an idea we should continue to explore. We will continue to work on this issue with him as leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), who has the highest professional and personal esteem of every Member of this institution.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, Mr. NEAL, for yielding.

I rise with a heavy heart to join him in opposing this mean-spirited, reckless bill.

Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, I was elected to fight for and to serve the people of my district. Today, they are calling and begging for us to slow down and to do this the right way. In their heart of hearts, the public knows that the safety net will be used to pay for this reckless corporate tax cut.

Taxpayers know that this shameful deal destroys the hopes and dreams of

too many as it robs poor Peter to pay wealthy Paul. That is not right. That is not fair. That is not just.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot hide the truth from the sick, the elderly, the disabled for whom this bill may mean life or death. You cannot hide the truth from the middle class, working, and immigrant families who need every penny to make ends meet. You cannot hide the truth from teachers who try to lend a helping hand to students who struggle to get an education.

I, for one, refuse to hide the truth about this bill's attack on the separation of church and State.

Mr. Speaker, as we abandon our constitutional duty and sacrifice our moral authority, I fear that history will not be kind to any of us.

In another time, in another period, Members of Congress came together in a bipartisan fashion. They met, debated, and passed a tax bill that served the best interest of all people—not just a select few. They took their time. They did it right, and we should be doing it right.

Today, the RECORD must reflect the sad truth of this missed opportunity. H.R. 1 steals from our veterans, our seniors, our children, and from generations yet unborn. All taxpayers expect, demand, and deserve better—much better—than legislation which would put politics before the good of the people.

This bill is a shame, a disgrace, and honestly, Mr. Speaker, it breaks my heart. I urge each and every one of my colleagues to vote “no.”

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the average family of four in the Fifth District of Georgia will see a tax cut of \$1,484.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP), one of the new members of the Ways and Means Committee who has really been a leader for families, small businesses, and industry.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman for yielding, for his steadfast leadership, and for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this incredible opportunity on behalf of this great country.

Tax reform is about giving hard-working Americans of all walks of life the confidence they need to make their dreams a reality. So the question that needs to be asked is whether or not the current Tax Code, and all of its targeted tax credits, really increases people's paychecks. Does it treat people fairly? Does it put American workers first?

What about fostering economic growth? Does it help create more good-paying jobs? On that subject, I think Michigan is a great case study, my home State of Michigan. You see, I am from the Motor City where we are known for our blue-collar work ethic. Our families come from humble beginnings. They get up every morning and go to work to make ends meet to build a better life for their family and for their kids. We persevered through some

pretty serious economic death spirals, I must say, and I would refer back to 2008 as an example.

More than 8,000 people left our State. Just think about that. We are the only State in the Union to lose population—and more would have left if they had a chance to sell their homes.

At the time, I was the Senate majority leader in Michigan under the last administration, overseeing the only Republican branch of government. I saw firsthand how the administration pursued targeted tax credits, one after the other, that favored one industry over the other. It was a classic example of government picking winners over losers, and as expected, it failed miserably.

As we see at the Federal level today, in Michigan, these targeted tax benefits were paid for by everyone else in the form of tax increases, and not only did it fail to attract growth in emerging sectors as they had hoped, but it caused our economy to go into a tailspin, a very serious tailspin.

Michigan quickly became the only State in the country experiencing zero economic growth. Per capita income fell for the first time. It was one of the highest to begin with, and just a few years later, it was one of the lowest. By 2009, unemployment hit a record high of 15 percent. Neighboring States that had more hospitable environments for good job growth attracted our families and our neighbors.

As I said, we are the only State in the Union to lose population. But as Senate majority leader at that time of the only Republican branch of government, we didn't just say no to the government's failed policies. We offered solutions and loaded up the pipeline with legislation to help the newly elected Republican legislature and Governor Rick Snyder get the job done.

What did we do? We did exactly what we are doing here today. We started with tax reform. While balancing budgets, we found ways to lower rates on individuals, reduce baseline rates for job creators, and eliminate tax credits that favored certain industries over others.

Michigan created an environment that grew the economy and helped families get ahead. Sure enough, just 2 months after these reforms happened, job growth turned positive again in Michigan.

Today, in Michigan, we are a top 10 probusiness State and ranked 12th among all States for overall business climate. Unemployment is the lowest it has been in my home district of 3.3 percent, in Livingston County.

Detroit is re-emerging again as an economic powerhouse. The streets are alive with entrepreneurs and young people finally living downtown. The future looks great for the comeback city.

The moral of this story is tax reform, but it is not just about tax cuts. It is about real reform to a broken system. Getting tax reform done right means delivering real relief, and I have seen it firsthand in Michigan.

I know it can happen at the national level. It is not rocket science. It is about giving people back more that is rightfully theirs. It is about freeing up more capital to create more jobs, increase wages, and compete at the global level. This is how you grow an economy from the ground up.

Mr. Speaker, let's vote for our constituents today. Do it for the middle-income family of four or the struggling mom. Let's pass this bill today. It has been 31 years. It is time for relief. It is long overdue.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, under the Republican tax bill, 570,000 Michigan households earning less than \$160,000 a year will see a tax hike.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), a thoughtful member of the Ways and Means Committee, whose admonitions to all of us should be something we could all rally around.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this reckless and fiscally irresponsible bill that is going to add \$2.3 trillion to our national debt.

There is a reason why airports, universities, the Fraternal Order of Police, home builders, and veterans groups are opposed to this bill. It is because it will increase taxes on tens of millions of middle class families. That is according to the Joint Committee on Taxation.

One of the most heartless provisions would make it harder for middle class families to rebuild after disaster. When you vote today, you are telling the survivors of the California fires that you don't care about them or about the middle class families in your district who one day may face a tornado or a hurricane—all to save a few dollars so that we can give a tax break to corporations.

We have a chance today to reject this bill, to come together, hold hearings, and hear from experts—something that wasn't done when the Republicans wrote this bill.

We can take ideas from both side of the aisle and write a tax bill that helps middle class working families. Let's reject this bill and work on real tax reform that will not raise taxes on the middle class and won't add \$2.3 trillion—that is with a T—to our national debt.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the average family of four in California's Fifth District will see a tax cut of \$2,300.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO), who has been an advocate not only for Floridians but Puerto Rico and a number of our families and communities around the country.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

This crucial legislation before us today marks the first time in 31 years that Congress has considered a major overhaul to the current Tax Code that

is overly cumbersome, wildly outdated, and riddled with special-interest loopholes.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious there is a great deal of frustration and anxiety in our country. I truly believe it is due to the fact that the economic recovery has not reached every household. Throughout south Florida, I hear from families and small businesses who are worried about saving for their kids' college or making payroll.

While the stock market is humming and unemployment is low, wages have been stagnant, and the so-called recovery has left way too many people behind.

□ 0945

That is why this bill is so important.

This legislation will collapse and lower current tax rates to ensure a typical middle-income family in south Florida will receive about \$1,500 in tax relief. For married couples, it doubles the standard deduction from \$12,000 to \$24,000, drastically simplifying the process of filing taxes each year for over 90 percent of Americans while allowing taxpayers to keep more of their hard-earned money.

The bill also expands the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$1,600 per child, a benefit that will be seen by 43,768 taxpayers in Florida's 26th District, while we are also making it easier to save for college by expanding 529 plans to cover more expenses, including apprenticeship programs. All these benefits will directly help alleviate the increasing cost of raising a family.

On the business side, this bill gives American companies of all sizes, especially our smaller enterprises and entrepreneurs, a chance to compete and win in the new globalized economy. By providing businesses with lower tax rates, we will make it easier for job creators to invest here at home and increase paychecks for American workers.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud Member of the Ways and Means Committee, I commend Chairman BRADY, his staff, and the Members of this House who will soon support this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to ensure we provide all Americans, especially the most vulnerable, the opportunity to find their economic success.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BRADY for working with me to begin addressing the important issue of helping our fellow American citizens in Puerto Rico. After the devastating effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, our committee delivered immediate results for the island through a disaster tax relief package targeted to help people get back on their feet.

While it will take at least months for the island to fully recover, we are providing even more assistance to Puerto Rico with the legislation being considered today.

I want to thank Chairman BRADY for helping us extend the rum cover-over to \$13.25 per proof gallon to be paid

back to the treasuries of both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands through 2023. I am also grateful that under this bill, companies operating in Puerto Rico can deduct income attributable to domestic production activities retroactively for the year 2017.

Moving forward, I am hopeful we can work together to find creative solutions to better target the child tax credit to serve more Puerto Rico families and study the expanded use of the earned income tax credit for the Commonwealth. In addition, I look forward to continuing to work on solutions to ensure the businesses operating on the island have the certainty they need in terms of tax planning to hire more workers and strengthen Puerto Rico's economy.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, 22,000 constituents of the gentleman from Miami's district will eventually face the Alzheimer's tax increase that is included in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), who is a neighbor, a really nice guy, and a very thoughtful member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I include in the RECORD, first a letter from the Commissioner of Revenue Services in the State of Connecticut, who has detailed out the impact of this tax on Connecticut residents.

NOVEMBER 8, 2017.

Hon. JOHN B. LARSON,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN LARSON: Thank you for opportunity to comment on the federal tax changes being considered in H.R. 1. We appreciate your leadership in trying to set the record straight as this partisan effort is rushed to judgment with no real input and much fiscal uncertainty.

Unfortunately, what we see so far from a national and state perspective is very troubling. Some of the proposals to reduce taxes on corporate and pass-through business income could provide needed economic stimulus nationally and for states like Connecticut. Unfortunately, on balance, H.R. 1 is fundamentally flawed:

Even the low estimate of a \$1.5 trillion cost is not paid for and is really massive federal tax deficit spending. The nation has been down this road before and surely we should have learned something from the worst economic recession in modern times.

Otherwise unaffordable tax cuts have long been part of a political strategy to "starve the beast." Due to its long term unfunded cost, this Republican tax plan will compel big cuts in federal funding, such as Medicaid, that are important to states like Connecticut.

Contrary to all the talk of a "middle income tax cut," the plan actually represents a huge windfall to the very wealthiest federal taxpayers and is truly regressive. For our own state of Connecticut, over 75% of the tax cut goes to the top 1% who would pay 8.5% less on average. Everyone else would see a trivial 1.2% reduction in federal tax liability and many will actually owe much more in federal income taxes.

As discussed more specifically below, the proposed plan shifts most of the tax cost and the least of any tax benefit to states in the Northeast, Great Lakes and West Coast re-

gions of the country. Thus, Connecticut and similar states will even more disproportionately pay in federal taxes far more than is received in federal benefits—further subsidizing regions of the country where states make far less of a state and local tax effort.

Drilling down a bit further, several aspects of this partisan plan will hit especially hard:

Eliminating deductibility of state income tax paid is worth an estimated \$8.7 billion to mostly middle income Connecticut taxpayers.

Capping deductibility of local property tax paid at \$10,000 will increase federal income taxes for a significant proportion of Connecticut taxpayers who claim \$4.9 billion.

Any benefit to lower and lower moderate income taxpayers from higher standard deductions and child care credits will likely be more than offset by the shell game of imposing a higher lowest rate bracket of 12% and replacing the current \$4,050 personal exemption with a \$300 deduction that is proposed to end in 5 years.

Eliminating deductibility of medical/dental expenses will be \$1.6 billion hardship for Connecticut taxpayers at all levels who are out of work and have catastrophic medical costs.

Eliminating deductibility of student loan interest only adds a further financial burden for primarily younger taxpayers and their families already struggling with educational indebtedness.

Sadly, these and many other significant issues of fiscal irresponsibility and tax unfairness seem to be of no concern in the partisan rush to pass legislation before taxpayers see through the slogans and realize the costs. Indeed, glimpses of what may be in the Republican Senate version suggests that it will only get worse. Thank you for your efforts to speak out for our Connecticut taxpayers and set the record straight.

Sincerely,

KEVIN B. SULLIVAN,
Commissioner.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Second, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter out of a cross section of constituents who are directly and adversely impacted by this tax increase.

MIDDLE CLASS CUTS

Ms. Diane Hebenstreit—West Hartford, CT
06107

I am a lifetime resident of Connecticut, and I ask that you do not vote for the proposed Federal Tax plan. From what I see, it's providing large tax breaks that benefit the rich and the corporations.

The estate tax benefit we have now is more than generous, only the very wealthy will benefit from repealing the estate tax.

The proposed caps on state and property tax deductions combined with the increased standard deduction, will cause myself as well as others to use the standard deduction instead of itemizing. This will eliminate the financial benefit of owning my home, and I am concerned it will negatively affect its value.

The personal exemption of \$4,050 is going away. This is not something that's been highlighted in the news. So as a single payer, I'll receive a \$12,000 standard deduction, but lose the \$4,050 personal exemption resulting in more of my income being taxed than under the current plan.

And at a higher rate! I am currently in the 10% tax bracket. Under this new plan it will increase to 12%.

This is not a tax plan that benefits me, or I expect any other middle income resident. Vote No.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a

transcript of an interview with our esteemed chairman, KEVIN BRADY, and Heidi Przybyla that appeared on "Morning Joe."

KEVIN BRADY—MORNING JOE TRANSCRIPT—
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Heidi Przybyla, USA Today: This economic growth that you all are promising, it cannot happen unless the cuts occur at the same time. In fact the Joint Committee on Taxation's economic model assumes that the type of tax cuts that you're doing now that are not paid for could actually be a drag on economic growth. Can you please speak to that?

Brady: The reason we moved back towards a balanced budget is one, there is substantial growth, miss, but again, that won't do it. You have to simplify the code, eliminate so much of these special breaks on the business and the individual side as well. It's the combination of both of those that gets you back to a balanced budget over time. That's why people complain 'Look you're really simplifying the code dramatically, there's a lot of things that go'. Not everyone is happy about that but that is what, sort of the tough choices you have to make, along with growth, to make sure this moves us toward a balanced budget.

Przybyla: But that is not what's happening here. This is still, regardless of these loopholes that you're closing, it's still a big blowhole in the deficit and that is not what the model was in '86 for instance when Reagan did it. This model that I'm speaking of still assumes that this could be a drag on economic growth because you're not doing the type of spending cuts, not just simplification in the code, but spending cuts.

Brady: Here, one, there are a number of models on growth and I'm sure there will be a healthy debate, that's a good thing. What we know is this dramatically grows the economy in revenues not just here in Washington, but state and local levels as well. But you make a great point: tax reform alone, alone won't get us to a balanced budget, we have to have spending constraints along with that. As I know, as House Republicans, we are turning toward welfare reform and how we tackle our entitlements in a way to save them. That's all part of the steps it takes to get us back to a fiscally responsible area. But I do know this, is you want to see continued deficits and debts, just stay with a slow growth economy like we saw the last ten years. We know what that produced.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I also include in the RECORD a letter from AARP, who is in opposition to this bill.

AARP,
November 15, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of our members and all Americans age 50 and older, AARP is writing to express our views on H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. AARP, with its nearly 38 million members in all 50 States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, represents individuals affected by H.R. 1 in myriad ways. As we did with the last major effort at tax reform a generation ago, AARP is prepared to support tax legislation that makes the tax code more equitable and efficient, promotes growth, and produces sufficient revenue to pay for critical national programs, including Medicare and Medicaid. However, H.R. 1 in its current form does not meet these criteria.

Efforts to restructure all or part of the federal tax system should in particular recognize the importance of—and therefore maintain—incentives for health and retirement security. Such incentives are not only im-

portant to assist individuals in attaining the security they deserve, but are vital to our nation's future economic well-being. AARP is dedicated to enhancing retirement security, including retention of the extra standard deduction for those ages 65 or older; improving access to, and targeted incentives for, workplace retirement saving plans, and protection of earned pensions for vulnerable retirees and their families. We greatly appreciate that H.R. 1 rejects proposals to make significant changes to the tax treatment of retirement contributions, which would have affected the ability or commitment of many tax filers to save for their retirement. AARP also remains committed to advocating for affordable, meaningful health care, including retention of the medical expense itemized deduction at 7.5%, preservation of tax exempt status of employer sponsored insurance coverage; maintenance of tax subsidies for lower- and moderate-income Americans to purchase health insurance coverage in health care marketplaces; and the creation of a new, non-refundable tax credit for working family caregivers.

As tax legislation advances, changes to the tax code should not result in a disproportionate, adverse impact on older Americans. According to the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT), H.R. 1 will reduce taxes for millions of taxpayers beginning in 2019. We are concerned, however, that in 2027, also according to JCT, the 73 million taxpayers with incomes between \$10,000 and \$50,000 would collectively pay \$2.9 billion more in individual income taxes. AARP has estimated that H.R. 1 will increase taxes on 1.2 million taxpayers age 65 and older in 2018, and by 2027, 4.9 million older taxpayers will experience higher taxes. In addition, H.R. 1 will provide no tax relief for 5.1 million older taxpayers in 2018 and 5.3 million taxpayers by 2027.

The impact on older tax filers is the cumulative result of many policy changes made in H.R. 1, but a number of specific provisions disproportionately affect older Americans. Nearly three-quarters of tax filers who claim the medical expense deduction are age 50 or older and live with a chronic condition or illness. Seventy percent of filers who claim this deduction have income below \$75,000. H.R. 1 also eliminates the additional standard deduction for filers who are 65 and older, while at the same time increasing the lowest tax rate. These provisions, along with other proposals that more broadly affect the tax liability of millions of filers, such as the expiration of the new Family Flexibility Credit in 2023, and the partial repeal of the state and local tax deduction, result in little tax benefit to many older tax filers, and for others, a tax increase.

Also troubling is the negative effect H.R. 1 will have on the nation's ability to fund critical priorities. H.R. 1 will increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years, and an unknown amount beyond 2027. The large increase in the deficit will inevitably lead to calls for greater spending cuts, which are likely to include dramatic cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and other critical programs serving older Americans. The Congressional Budget Office has now published a letter stating that unless Congress takes action, H.R. 1 will result in automatic federal funding cuts of \$136 billion in fiscal year 2018, \$25 billion of which must come from Medicare.

We urge Congress to work in a bipartisan manner to enact tax legislation that better meets the needs of older Americans and the nation, and we stand ready to work with you toward that end.

Sincerely,

NANCY A. LEAMOND,
Executive Vice President and
Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a

letter from the Congressional Budget Office, which details out the other shoe to fall in this legislation.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, November 13, 2017.

Hon. STENY H. HOYER,
Democratic Whip, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN: This letter responds to your request for information about the effects of legislation that would raise deficits by an estimated \$1.5 trillion over the 2018–2027 period, specifically with respect to a sequestration—or cancellation of budgetary resources—in accordance with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO; Public Law 111–139).

The PAYGO law requires that new legislation enacted during a term of Congress does not collectively increase estimated deficits. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is required to maintain two so-called PAYGO scorecards to report the cumulative changes generated by new legislation in estimated revenues and outlays over the next five years and ten years. If either scorecard indicates a net increase in the deficit, OMB is required to order a sequestration to eliminate the overage. The authority to determine whether a sequestration is required (and if so, exactly how to make the necessary cuts in budget authority) rests solely with OMB.

CBO has analyzed the implications of enacting a bill that would increase deficits by \$1.5 trillion over a 10-year window, without enacting any further legislation to offset that increase. In accordance with the PAYGO law, OMB would record the average annual deficit on its PAYGO scorecard, showing deficit increases of, in the example provided, \$150 billion per year. If the bill were enacted before the end of the calendar year, that amount would be added to the current balances on the PAYGO scorecard, which for 2018, show a positive balance of \$14 billion. (For years after 2018, the balances range from a \$14 billion credit to a \$1 billion debit.)

Without enacting subsequent legislation to either offset that deficit increase, waive the recordation of the bill's impact on the scorecard, or otherwise mitigate or eliminate the requirements of the PAYGO law, OMB would be required to issue a sequestration order within 15 days of the end of the session of Congress to reduce spending in fiscal year 2018 by the resultant total of \$136 billion. However, the PAYGO law limits reductions to Medicare to four percentage points (or roughly \$25 billion for that year), leaving about \$111 billion to be sequestered from the remaining mandatory accounts. Because the law entirely exempts many large accounts including low-income programs and social security, the annual resources available from which OMB must draw is, in CBO's estimation, only between \$85 billion to \$90 billion, significantly less than the amount that would be required to be sequestered. (For a full list of accounts subject to automatic reductions, see OMB Report to the Congress on the Joint Committee Reductions for Fiscal Year 2018, <https://go.usa.gov/xnZ3U>.)

Given that the required reduction in spending exceeds the estimated amount of available resources in each year over the next 10 years, in the absence of further legislation, OMB would be unable to implement the full extent of outlay reductions required by the PAYGO law.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by preempting

our distinguished chairman and, for the RECORD, state that a middle class family in the State of Connecticut, from West Hartford, with a combined income of \$125,000, with a mortgage and a kid in college, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation and to the Department of Revenue Services in the State of Connecticut, will see a tax increase of \$767 next year.

Then with the clever clawback provision—that Grover Norquist kind of clawback provision that gives with one hand and takes away with the other—in 2023, that hardworking family in the middle class will see a \$1,667 increase.

So why are we here?

It is pretty easy to figure out this. These are honorable people, but sometimes they are called upon to do a political task, or as Mr. COLLINS put it: My donors are basically saying, “Get it done or don’t ever call me again.”

Speaking of New York, my colleagues in New York and New Jersey, because we are donor States and because we make itemized deductions, we find ourselves in the situation where we are paying double taxation.

Don’t take our word for it. Just ask a member of your own caucus. Ask PETER KING, who describes this as the most massive redistribution of wealth at the expense of teachers, machinists, and people who are of the professional class whom you have found that you want to tax their success.

But what adds insult to injury above all else, aside from being a donor State and double taxation, is the cruelest cut. We take a Pledge of Allegiance. We pledge allegiance to the Constitution. But some of you pledge allegiance to Grover Norquist. In doing so, you want to make sure that you can shrink Social Security and Medicare up so small you can drown it in the bathtub.

That is what this does: \$25 billion will come out of that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds. I would note that families in Connecticut’s First District will see an average tax cut of \$3,858 and grow jobs by 11,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to enter into a colloquy with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO).

Mr. CURBELO, you and Resident Commissioner GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN have been tireless advocates for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. I appreciate the hard work you have done to help our fellow citizens on the island. I agree, this tax reform bill is a good first step, and I look forward to working with you on ideas to best serve the people on this island.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY for that.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), who is one of the most thoughtful Members of Congress, a leader in the field of renewable energy, and my friend.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from 17 environmental organizations opposing this legislation.

NOVEMBER 8, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, on behalf of our millions of members and activists, we write to urge you to oppose the Republican leadership’s tax legislation, the misnamed Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1). This plan would lavish huge and permanent tax cuts to the richest 1% and corporate polluters that are destined to be paid for by the health and environmental well-being of communities across the country. The bill’s debt-busting tax cuts for the wealthiest are sure to mean deep cuts to federal and state programs and safeguards that protect our air, water, lands, and wildlife that benefit people across this country every day. The plan puts at risk our clean energy future by preserving tax breaks for dirty energy sources while slashing them for cleaner forms of energy. And if the tax plan itself weren’t harmful enough, it is also being packaged in the Senate with unrelated, controversial legislation that hands over the pristine and sacred Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to exploitation by Big Oil.

This plan steers most of its tax breaks to the wealthiest people in this country and corporations and adds at least \$1.5 trillion to the deficit. Americans across the country will suffer because those tax cuts are likely to be paid for by slashing services and safeguards that our government provides, from healthcare to education to environmental protection. The health of communities across the nation will suffer if the Environmental Protection Agency is further hampered in its mission to protect public health and hold polluters accountable for violating laws like the Clean Air Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The people who work in and benefit from America’s thriving outdoor recreational economy will take a hit if the national parks and other lands stewarded by the Department of the Interior are forced to suffer further cuts because of this reckless tax plan.

This tax plan also steers our nation’s energy policy in the wrong direction by leaving in place the vast majority of existing tax preferences for polluting industries like oil, gas, coal and nuclear and reducing, phasing-out, and eliminating incentives for cleaner sources of energy. Permanent tax breaks for fossil fuels dwarf those for renewables by a margin of 7:1, yet this bill would suddenly eliminate the tax credit for purchasing an electric vehicle, disrupt the wind industry by reducing the credit for future projects by a third and placing into jeopardy the eligibility of existing projects, and eliminate the commercial solar investment credit. While some clean energy technology credits are re-introduced, they, too, are set to phase out. Meanwhile, oil companies will receive a new billion dollar hand out while only the smallest of existing preferences for fossil fuels are eliminated—leaving more than \$14 billion in permanent annual federal subsidies untouched. Despite rhetoric from GOP leaders that the tax code shouldn’t pick winners and losers, this bill very clearly picks polluting energy sectors as winners yet again, putting at risk the impressive growth of clean energy and robbing us and our children of a cleaner future.

The GOP leadership’s plan is to package this tax legislation in the Senate with unrelated, controversial legislation that would open up the iconic Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. This legislation would irreversibly damage one of America’s greatest wild places and is only being included in a desperate attempt to secure enough votes in the Senate for tax cuts for corporations and

the wealthiest Americans. The Arctic Refuge’s spectacular landscape of rugged mountains, boreal forests, and wild rivers supports more than 250 species including polar and brown bears, musk oxen, and birds that migrate from all 50 states and 6 continents each year. The indigenous Gwich’in people call the refuge’s coastal plain “The Sacred Place Where Life Begins,” an area that serves as the calving grounds for the Porcupine Caribou Herd which they rely on as a primary source of food, and for cultural and spiritual needs. This provision is being included in an attempt to generate \$1 billion in government revenue to pay for the package’s tax cuts for the wealthy, but multiple analyses show that it is unlikely to raise anywhere close to that amount. In short, including drilling in the Arctic Refuge in the tax legislation is both environmentally and fiscally irresponsible.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose H.R. 1 and instead work together on legislation that will truly benefit our communities, power our economy with clean, renewable energy, and protect the environment that we all depend upon for our health and well-being.

Sincerely,

350.org, Alaska Wilderness League, Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Water Action, Earthjustice, Environment America, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Hip Hop Caucus, League of Conservation Voters, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oil Change International, Public Citizen, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, Union of Concerned Scientists, Voices for Progress.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump is going to be on Capitol Hill rallying Republicans to vote for his tax bill perfectly designed for his benefit: eliminating the alternative minimum tax, one of the few ways he pays any tax at all; abolishing the inheritance tax, allowing him to pass on tax-free hundreds of millions of dollars to his family; and expanding access to the lower passthrough tax rates for many large and profitable businesses. Donald Trump lists hundreds of passthrough entities on his financial forms.

Donald Trump is the king of debt, and this monstrosity of a tax bill is fueled by increasing the national debt \$2.3 trillion and cutting taxes for the wealthy financed by increased debt burden on our children and grandchildren.

Of course, details are starting to leak out, such as special deals for baseball teams. Breaking a bipartisan commitment to the wind energy industry is already causing their stock prices to fall, jeopardizing billions of dollars of projects and putting tens of thousands of jobs at risk with the only retroactive provision in the bill breaking a bipartisan commitment that many of us worked on with the energy industry.

The Republican proposal showers riches on the wealthiest Americans and most profitable corporations who are not going to create jobs and raise wages. What they are going to do is buy things and make more money. What is going to happen is that, in the years ahead, taxes are going to rise for millions of Americans and even more in the future.

Now, this tax perhaps has the most cruel element—what I call the Alzheimer's tax—repealing the medical expense deduction used by over 9 million middle class Americans who saved almost \$90 billion in 2015—gone.

This stunning action places additional burdens on many elderly and vulnerable middle-income Americans trying to plan ahead for the crushing financial burden dealing with Alzheimer's. We never had a hearing on anything like this. It wouldn't stand the light of day. The American public will be cranky about this.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that families of four, the average family in Oregon's Third District, will see a tax cut of \$2,200.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), who is the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and a dear friend of mine.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, for almost a decade, Americans suffered under Obamanomics. Their savings remain decimated, their paychecks were stagnant, and their American dreams were diminished.

But, Mr. Speaker, a new day has dawned. Under the leadership of President Trump, Speaker RYAN, and Chairman BRADY, we are on the precipice of passing a fairer, flatter, simpler, and more competitive Tax Code, one built for 3-plus percent economic growth.

The American people can now imagine a Tax Code that brings jobs and capital back to America. They can imagine a Tax Code that is simplified from 70,000 pages to 500, where 90 percent of Americans can fill out their return on a postcard. They can imagine a Tax Code swept of all the special interest loopholes. They can imagine a Tax Code creating lower rates for working Americans and small businesses, and they can now imagine a Tax Code that is all about economic growth.

All my friends on the other side of the aisle can offer is the politics of division, envy, and class warfare.

I am proud to support the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act because it is all about better jobs, fair taxes, and bigger paychecks.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, 17,000 people in Mr. HENSARLING's district will now pay higher interest on their student loan deductions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), who is a great advocate for the heartland of America.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, of all the policy changes that are being recommended in this legislation before us today, the one that scares me the most is the repeal of the so-called Johnson amendment.

The Johnson amendment basically says: If you are a religious organization or a nonprofit and if you engage in partisan political activity, you lose your tax-exempt status.

Repealing that has the potential of politicizing the pulpit nationwide. In

fact, 103 religious organizations, 4,200 faith-based leaders in this country, and 5,500 nonprofits have written a letter to every Member of Congress telling us: Don't do this.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD these letters.

Updated November 1, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,

Speaker,

Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,

Senate Majority Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,

House Democratic Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK SCHUMER,

Senate Democratic Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,

Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee,

Washington, DC.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,

Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance,

Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,

Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee,

Washington, DC.

Hon. RON WYDEN,

Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Finance,

Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, LEADER PELOSI, LEADER SCHUMER, CHAIRMAN BRADY, CHAIRMAN HATCH, RANKING MEMBER NEAL, AND RANKING MEMBER WYDEN: We, the 103 undersigned religious and denominational organizations strongly oppose any effort to weaken or eliminate protections that prohibit 501(c)(3) organizations, including houses of worship, from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Current law serves as a valuable safeguard for the integrity of our charitable sector and campaign finance system.

Religious leaders often use their pulpits to address the moral and political issues of the day. They also can, in their personal capacities and without the resources of their houses of worship, endorse and oppose political candidates. Houses of worship can engage in public debate on any issue, host candidate forums, engage in voter registration drives, encourage people to vote, help transport people to the polls and even, with a few boundaries, lobby on specific legislation and invite candidates to speak. Tax-exempt houses of worship may not, however, endorse or oppose candidates or use their tax-exempt donations to contribute to candidates' campaigns. Current law simply limits groups from being both a tax-exempt ministry and a partisan political entity.

As religious organizations, we oppose any attempt to weaken the current protections offered by the 501(c)(3) campaign intervention prohibition because:

People of faith do not want partisan political fights infiltrating their houses of worship. Houses of worship are spaces for members of religious communities to come together, not be divided along political lines; faith ought to be a source of connection and community, not division and discord. Indeed, the vast majority of Americans do not want houses of worship to issue political endorsements. Particularly in today's political climate, such endorsements would be highly divisive and would have a detrimental impact on civil discourse.

Current law protects the integrity of houses of worship. If houses of worship endorse candidates, their prophetic voice, their ability to speak truth to power as political outsiders, is threatened. The credibility and integrity of congregations would suffer with bad decisions of candidates they endorsed.

Tying America's houses of worship to partisan activity demeans the institutions from which so many believers expect unimpeachable decency.

Current law protects the independence of houses of worship. Houses of worship often speak out on issues of justice and morality and do good works within the community but may also labor to adequately fund their ministries. Permitting electioneering in churches would give partisan groups incentive to use congregations as a conduit for political activity and expenditures. Changing the law would also make them vulnerable to individuals and corporations who could offer large donations or a politician promising social service contracts in exchange for taking a position on a candidate. Even proposals that would permit an "insubstantial" standard or allow limited electioneering only if it is in furtherance of an organization's mission would actually invite increased government intrusion, scrutiny, and oversight.

The charitable sector, particularly houses of worship, should not become another cog in a political machine or another loophole in campaign finance laws. We strongly urge you to oppose any efforts to repeal or weaken protections in the law for 501(c)(3) organizations, including houses of worship.

Sincerely,

African American Ministers in Action; African Methodist Episcopal Church—Social Action Commission; Alabama Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Alliance of Baptists; American Baptist Churches USA; American Baptist Home Mission Societies; American Friends Service Committee; American Jewish Committee (AJC); Anti-Defamation League; Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists; B'nai B'rith International; Baptist Center for Ethics; Baptist Fellowship Northeast; Baptist General Association of Virginia; Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty; Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America—Bautistas por la Paz; Baptist Women in Ministry; Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice; California Council of Churches IMPACT; Catholics for Choice.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; Central Conference of American Rabbis; Christian Life Commission; Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church; Churchnet, a ministry of the Baptist General Convention of Missouri; Colorado Council of Churches; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Heartland; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Kentucky; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Arkansas; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Florida; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Mississippi; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Oklahoma; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Texas; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship West; Disciples Center for Public Witness; Ecumenical Catholic Communion.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; The Episcopal Church; Equal Partners in Faith; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches; Faith Action Network—Washington State; Faith in Public Life; Faith Voices Arkansas; Faithful America; Florida Council of Churches; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.; Hindu American Foundation; Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas; Interfaith Alliance; International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON); Islamic Networks Group; Islamic Society of North America.

Jewish Community Relations Council, Greater Boston; Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington; Jewish Council for Public Affairs; The Jewish Federations of North America; Jewish Women International; Kentucky Council of Churches; Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Baptist Convention of America; National Council of Churches; National Council of Jewish Women; National Sikh Campaign; NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; New Baptist Covenant; North Carolina Council of Churches; Oklahoma Conference of Churches; Pastors for Oklahoma Kids; Pastors for Texas Children; Pax Christi, Montgomery County, MD chapters; Pennsylvania Council of Churches.

Presbyterian Church USA, Washington Office of Public Witness; Progressive National Baptist Convention; Reconstructionist Rabbinical Assembly; Religions for Peace USA; Religious Institute; Rhode Island State Council of Churches; Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America; South Carolina Christian Action Council; South Dakota Faith in Public Life; T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights; Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Texas Baptists Committed; Texas Faith Network; Texas Impact; Union for Reform Judaism; Unitarian Universalist Association; Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries; The United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society; Virginia Council of Churches; Women of Reform Judaism; Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER).

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FAITH VOICES,
August 16, 2017.

Representative RON KIND,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KIND: As a leader in my religious community, I am strongly opposed to any effort to repeal or weaken current law that protects houses of worship from becoming centers of partisan politics. Changing the law would threaten the integrity and independence of houses of worship. We must not allow our sacred spaces to be transformed into spaces used to endorse or oppose political candidates.

Faith leaders are called to speak truth to power, and we cannot do so if we are merely cogs in partisan political machines. The prophetic role of faith communities necessitates that we retain our independent voice. Current law respects this independence and strikes the right balance: houses of worship that enjoy favored tax-exempt status may engage in advocacy to address moral and political issues, but they cannot tell people who to vote for or against. Nothing in current law, however, prohibits me from endorsing or opposing political candidates in my own personal capacity.

Changing the law to repeal or weaken the "Johnson Amendment"—the the section of the tax code that prevents tax-exempt nonprofit organizations from endorsing or opposing candidates—would harm houses of worship, which are not identified or divided by partisan lines. Particularly in today's political climate, engaging in partisan politics and issuing endorsements would be highly divisive and have a detrimental impact on congregational unity and civil discourse.

I therefore urge you to oppose any repeal or weakening of the Johnson Amendment, thereby protecting the independence and integrity of houses of worship and other religious organizations in the charitable sector.

Respectfully,
Wisconsin—

Rabbi Jessica Barolsky, Rabbi, Reform Judaism, Milwaukee, WI.

Pastor Kara Baylor, Director of the Center for Faith and Spirituality, Carthage College, Kenosha, WI.

Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Pastor, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Oshkosh, WI.

Rabbi Marc Berkson, Rabbi, Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun, Milwaukee, WI.

Ms. Andrea Bernstein, Section President, National Council of Jewish Women—Milwaukee Section, Milwaukee, WI.

Rabbi Jonathan Blatch, Rabbi, Temple Beth El, Madison, Madison, WI.

Rev. Mary Anne Biggs, Pastor, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Eagle River, WI.

Coral Bishop, Treasurer, First Baptist Church, Madison, WI.

Sr. Barbara Brylka, Pastoral Care Services, Felician Sisters—Villa St. Francis, Milwaukee, WI.

Sr. Rebecca Burke, Sister, Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, Saint Francis, WI.

Rabbi David Cohen, Rabbi, Congregation Sinai, Milwaukee, WI.

Rev. Cindy Crane, Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Rev. Michael Crosby, CR Agent, Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order, Milwaukee, WI.

Sr. Frances Cunningham, Senior Sister, School Sisters of St. Francis, Roman Catholic, Shorewood, WI.

Rev. Glenn Danz, Pastor, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Colgate, WI.

Mr. Steven C. Davis, Certified Lay Speaker/Leader, United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay, Glendale, WI.

Dr. Beverly Davison, Lay Leader, Former President, American Baptist Churches (U.S.A.), Madison, WI.

Rev. Dr. James Davison, First Baptist Church, Madison, WI.

SIGNERS OF THE COMMUNITY LETTER

The Community Letter in Support of Non-partisanship, signed by more than 5,500 organizations from every state and every segment of the charitable and foundation communities, makes a strong statement in support of nonpartisanship and urges those who have vowed to repeal or weaken this vital protection to leave existing law in place for nonprofit organizations and the people they serve.

ALABAMA

Alabama Asian Cultures Foundation, Birmingham; Alabama Association of Non-profits, Birmingham; Alabama Historic Ironworks Foundation, McCalla; Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Birmingham; Cahaba River Society, Birmingham; Cahaba Riverkeeper, Birmingham; Cloverdale Playhouse, Montgomery; Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Birmingham; Community Grief Support Service, Birmingham; Coosa Riverkeeper.

Empowered to Conquer, Birmingham; Family Promise of Coastal Alabama, Mobile; First Light, Inc., Birmingham; Fraternal Order of Eagles; Friends of Shades Creek, Inc., Homewood; Gasp, Inc., Birmingham; Girls Inc. of Central Alabama, Birmingham; Global Ties, Alabama, Huntsville; Greater Birmingham Ministries, Birmingham; Heart Gallery of Alabama, Inc.

Humane Society of Elmore County, Wetumpka; Huntsville Youth Orchestra; John Stallworth Foundation; KB Consulting, Hanceville; Prichard Boxing Academy, Prichard; Public Education Foundation of Anniston, Inc., Anniston; Ruff Wilson Youth Organization; Shelby Emergency Assistance, Inc., Montevallo; Society of Mayflower Descendants in Alabama, Alexander City; St. Vincent's Health System, Birmingham; Swell Fundraising, Birmingham.

The Arc of Shelby County, Pelham; The Dance Foundation, Birmingham; The Epilepsy Foundation of Alabama, Mobile; The

Greater Huntsville Humane Society, Huntsville; The National Center for Fire and Life Safety, Calera; Theatre Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa; United Way of East Central Alabama, Anniston; Village Creek Society, Birmingham; Virginia Samford Theatre, Birmingham; Workshops, Inc., Birmingham.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, when I go to my church, South Beaver Creek Lutheran Church, Sunday mornings with my family in rural western Wisconsin by our family farm, I view that place as a sanctuary for my soul; a place for us to congregate, to commune, to spend time in fellowship with our fellow neighbors, and to check up on one another.

Yes, preach values and preach moral lessons to our children, absolutely. But by repealing the Johnson amendment, you have the potential of creating conflict in the pews. You could be creating Republican and Democratic churches, mosques, and synagogues overnight.

This is one of the last refuges, one of the last institutions that we still have as a country given how much we are self-segregating and deciding whom we like to hang out with, what clubs we join, what people we want to associate with, even our own family members, because of political affiliation. Our places of worship are one of the last places we can come regardless of political affiliation.

This will create unnecessary strife and unnecessary conflict, and it has the potential of driving young people away from organized religion because they won't put up with this. It could be a backdoor attempt for a lot of political contributors now to get tax-exempt contributions to these organizations for direct, partisan political campaigns. That is why the Joint Committee on Taxation viewed this as a cost of over \$2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to reconsider and reject this, and let's prevent that conflict in our communities.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the average family of four in the Third District of Wisconsin will see a tax cut of over \$2,000.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), who is the chairman of the Small Business Committee and a champion for small businesses.

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Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

As a result of this bill, Ohio families will keep more of what they earn. Additionally, it will create tens of thousands of jobs in Ohio and in other States all across the country.

As chairman of the House Small Business Committee, I want to make sure that the Tax Code works for our Nation's job creators so that we can create jobs, not against them.

Seventy percent of the new jobs created in the American economy nowadays are created by small businesses. Unfortunately, small businesses are getting killed by the existing Tax Code.

This Tax Code will bring rates down from approximately 40 percent for small-business owners to, in many cases, 25 percent and, in a lot of cases, 9 percent. From 40 percent down to 9 percent. That means small businesses can keep that money, invest and create more jobs for more Americans.

The naysayers around here obviously can't say enough bad about this bill, but it is going to be good for America. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, one-third of the gentleman's constituents claim the State and local tax deduction, totalling \$11,684 per family.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), a great friend to all of us here in this institution.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, before I start, I include in the RECORD two articles. One is a letter from the National Fraternal Order of Police, representing 330,000 police officers in this country coming out against this bill because it will affect their members in a very, very terrible way. The other is an article in *The New York Times* today: "Republican Tax Plans Put Corporations Over People."

NATIONAL FRATERNAL
ORDER OF POLICE,

Washington, DC, November 14, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY P. PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER, SENATOR MCCONNELL, REPRESENTATIVE PELOSI AND SENATOR SCHUMER: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to urge you to protect the State and local tax (SALT) deduction in the current tax code. Our members put their lives and safety at risk to protect our homes, schools and communities. Their salaries and the equipment they use are paid for by State and local taxes on property, sales and income. These funds are then invested in our law enforcement agencies and the men and women serving in law enforcement.

The FOP is very concerned that the partial or total elimination of the SALT deductions will endanger the ability of our State and local governments to fund these agencies and recruit the men and women we need to keep us safe. In addition, our members are also citizens of these communities who work and pay these State and local taxes. The elimination of the SALT deductions, in whole or in part, will be deeply harmful to them and their families, effectively raising their taxes as much as \$6,300 according to recent studies. The SALT deduction has been part of the tax code since it was originally drafted in 1913. Our members would certainly oppose any effort of the Federal government to tax their income twice by eliminating the SALT deduction.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I urge Congress to preserve the SALT deductions, to reject any effort to eliminate, in whole or in part, these deductions and oppose the final bill if these deductions are included. I thank you in advance for your consideration of our views. Please feel free to contact me or my Senior Advisor Jim Pasco if I can provide any additional information on this important issue.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

[From the *New York Times*, Nov. 16, 2017]
REPUBLICAN TAX PLANS PUT CORPORATIONS
OVER PEOPLE

(By Jim Tankersley)

WASHINGTON.—There are tough choices at the heart of the Republican tax bills speeding through Congress, and they make clear what the party values most in economic policy right now: deep and lasting tax cuts for corporations.

The bill set to pass the House on Thursday chooses to take from high-tax Democratic states, particularly California and New York, and give to lower-tax Republican states that President Trump carried in 2016, particularly Florida and Texas. It allows for tax increases on millions of families several years from now, if a future Congress does not intervene, but not for similar increases on corporations.

The version of the bill moving through the Senate Finance Committee chooses to give peace of mind to corporate executives planning their long-term investments. That comes at the expense of added anxiety for individual taxpayers, particularly those in the middle class, who could face stiff tax increases on Jan. 1, 2026.

A consistent conservative philosophy underpins all those decisions. So does a very large bet—economically and politically—on the power of business tax cuts to deliver rapid wage growth to United States workers.

There is also the appearance, to liberal critics in particular, of Republicans seeking to reward their prized constituencies first, while leaving others to bear the consequences if their most optimistic scenarios do not play out.

The tax plans have evolved rapidly since House leaders first introduced their bill at the beginning of the month. Amendments in the Ways and Means Committee restored some cherished tax breaks that had been targeted for elimination, including those for adoptive parents, and expanded the bill's tax breaks for owners of businesses that are not organized as traditional corporations.

The Senate bill differed from the House version when it was introduced last week, and broke further away on Tuesday night, with a package of amendments that included repealing the Affordable Care Act's mandate that most individuals buy health insurance. To comply with procedural rules that would allow Republicans to pass the bill on a party-line vote in the Senate, the amendment also set an expiration date—Dec. 25, 2025—on all the individual tax cuts in the legislation.

The plans also differ on their treatment of state and local tax deductions. The Senate would kill them entirely. The House would maintain them only for property taxes and cap the deduction at \$10,000 a year. Economists generally say that those tax breaks are inefficient. But eliminating them, in the context of the House bill, would add up to a large geographic transfer of income, according to research by Carl Davis, the research director of the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy in Washington.

The House bill would raise personal taxes on Californians and New Yorkers by a com-

bined \$16 billion in 2027, Mr. Davis found, while cutting personal taxes on Texans and Floridians by more than \$30 billion in total.

His analysis finds only one state that Mr. Trump carried in 2016—Utah—would receive lower personal tax benefits under the bill than would be expected, given its share of national income, compared with 11 states won by his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton. The average Clinton state would receive 82 percent of its expected benefits, by share of national income, under the plan. The average Trump state would receive 181 percent.

"It's not unusual for a tax bill to have varying impacts in different parts of the country," Mr. Davis said. "But the degree to which this bill makes winners and losers out of different states is remarkable."

Curtailling state and local deductions helps finance a core feature of both the House and Senate bills, which happens to be one of the few provisions Mr. Trump has called non-negotiable in tax discussions: cutting the corporate income tax to a flat 20 percent rate, down from a top rate of 35 percent today. Republicans have kept those cuts permanent, even as the Senate applied an expiration date to the individual cuts and to a key tax credit for families in the House bill. The Senate bill also sets an expiration date on breaks for so-called pass-through businesses, whose owners pay taxes on profits through the tax code for individuals.

In Washington, Republicans have stressed that cutting corporate taxes will supercharge economic growth, accelerating job creation and raising wages in the process. By that theory, making such cuts permanent is essential.

The gamble is apparent. Polls show that voters want corporations to pay higher, not lower, taxes and that they doubt corporate rate cuts will show up in their own paychecks, as the White House has claimed. Perhaps not coincidentally, Republican leaders have pitched their bills largely as middle-class tax cuts, stressing the benefits for the typical American family during television appearances and news conferences.

"The policy expects that the corporate tax cuts will do the most for growth," said Lanhee J. Chen, a research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, who was the policy director for Mitt Romney's presidential campaign in 2012. "On the other hand, they're the hardest to explain."

It is an especially tricky explanation in the context of the requests Republicans are making of individual taxpayers, particularly the middle class, to trust that any benefits they see from the bills will not vanish over a decade. The Senate bill is scheduled to deliver an individual tax increases on 137 million tax filers in 2027 if Congress does not intervene first, according to calculations by Ernie Tedeschi, an economist at Evercore ISI. Liberals warn the shock would be huge for low- and middle-income families.

Republicans are "making a choice as to which elements of their plan are permanent," said Jacob Leibenluft, a senior adviser at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and a former economic aide under President Barack Obama. "and I think it's worth starting with taking them at face value."

Canceling those looming increases would further add to the federal budget deficit, if the move is not paired with spending cuts. Middle-class families planning ahead can imagine two possible consequences from that decision: Either an immediate increase in their taxes eight years from now, or an explosion in federal budget deficits, which could necessitate spending cuts to safety net programs like Social Security and Medicare.

"The bill reflects talking out of both sides of your mouth at the same time—neither of

which is leading to good policy," said Maya MacGuineas, the president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

Republican leaders in both chambers have said that they will not allow individual tax breaks to expire—and that their corporate cuts will yield enough growth and additional tax revenue to pay for themselves, or at least come close. Ms. MacGuineas and others fear the opposite could be even more likely: that growth will fall far short of those optimistic projections, and when the expiring tax provisions come up for reauthorization, budget deficits will be swelling. The result, they say, would be more hard choices—and predictable ones.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised that editorial content inserted within unanimous consent requests could result in Members' time being charged.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, if it weren't bad enough, Mr. Speaker—and I come over to this side for a reason: I have got many brothers and sisters whom I love here—this is a terrible bill.

Unanimous consent here. The real price of this bill is hidden. \$30 billion in interest on the debt every year. Who pays this?

If it weren't bad enough, the taxes that people have to pay today, as well as our children and our grandchildren, but beyond that, the real price of this bill is further hidden. The temporary family flexibility credit expires after 5 years. The temporary exclusion for independent care costs expires after 5 years.

Some have estimated that, if Republicans make these provisions permanent, as they claim will happen in future Congresses, the costs of the bill will increase to over \$400 billion.

The Senate bill cuts off relief for families in 7 years. They are hiding over \$500 billion in costs.

I am particularly interested in the SALT exclusion as a deduction. Folks in New Jersey, California, Maryland, New York, Connecticut, et cetera, are going to be paying the costs of this deduction being removed.

You can't make this up.

In fact, the increase mostly comes from eliminating the State and local tax deduction for individuals, but corporations can continue to deduct their State and local taxes. You can't, Mr. and Mrs. America.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER).

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, today is not just about tax reform. Today is also about what we fundamentally believe as a nation. Today, we say working class families, not the government, are best equipped to make financial decisions.

Did we hear anything from our Democratic friends for nearly 8 years about lowering taxes on middle and lower income families? We did not.

Now, for the first time since 1986, we are going to overhaul our broken Tax Code.

Here is what it means for families in North Carolina. Middle-income families will see more than a \$2,300 increase in their take-home pay. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act means more than 30,000 new jobs in North Carolina.

I am encouraged that our Senate colleagues have also decided to include the ObamaCare individual mandate repeal and would urge our House Conference to consider it, as well.

Last, I would like to thank Chairman BRADY. There is no greater servant in the United States House. Thanks to his work and that of his team, today we keep our promise. It is time to move forward.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a thoughtful member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the promise of tax reform has degenerated into little more than a scam to aid tax dodgers. While public attention is diverted to the scandal in Alabama, Republicans are rushing through this sham of a bill, developed in the dark with lobbyists, before most Americans realize what is about to hit them in the face.

Instead of more jobs at home, Republicans create a giant, new gaping loophole to ship ever more jobs abroad. Even Speaker RYAN's home State Republican Senator RON JOHNSON concedes that, under this bill, "there will be a real incentive to keep manufacturing overseas."

It is hardly a surprise since President Trump's Wall Streeter designated to run the show has just been identified personally from leaked Bermudan documents as the past executive of not one, but 22 different island tax-paradise shell companies.

Meanwhile, another loophole, carried interest, that flows to plutocrats like Donald Trump. That is the very injustice he promised to stop last year. It will keep flowing right into their pocket.

As for the deduction for student interest for those who are overwhelmed with college loans, like other middle-class tax provisions, that is part of the \$65 billion that is cut out of tax incentives by Republicans in this bill.

They are totally dependent upon alternative facts.

Today's bill even authorizes those who want to pay absolutely zero in tax to do that by abolishing the alternative minimum tax (AMT). That one change that they make, in one year, would have put \$31 million in Donald Trump's pocket.

So you can certainly understand why he is coming to the Capitol today, just to say thank you: Thank you for the billion dollars-plus that is estimated to go to the Trump family under this bill. "When does my tax refund get here?" he must be saying.

Of course, we don't know precisely how much Donald Trump is enriched because these Republicans keep colluding to hide his tax returns.

Republicans want to apply a "dynamic score" to this bill. I say: create a dynamic workforce, invest in people, and don't overwhelm us with endless debt. Develop a more competitive, healthy workforce that empowers our DREAMers and other immigrants and that gives every American access to education and skill upgrades to achieve their full, God-given potential.

As they deny one middle-class deduction after another and impose this new Alzheimer's tax, Republicans claim that they have a patented tax miracle cure for most everything but baldness.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Texas an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. DOGGETT. We have seen this trickle-down, medicine sideshow before. It didn't work then; it won't work now.

All they are doing is grabbing for a political life preserver after 10 months of Republican failures and leave America drowning in debt. This isn't "tax reform." It is a giant giveaway to Washington special interests that must be stopped.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, my late father was the ranking Republican on the House Ways and Means Committee when the last tax reform was passed in 1986. I know personally how difficult it was then to bring all the competing interests together. Everything looks easy from a distance.

Everyone in this Congress would write a slightly different tax bill if given the chance to do so, but we can't have 535 different tax bills. Even Chairman BRADY would probably change some things if he had complete control over it. I would favor some slight differences, but this is a great bill, overall, for middle-income people. We need to do more in the future to cut spending along with it.

KEVIN BRADY is the right man at the right time. I think he has done a masterful job in bringing this bill to the floor. No other bill will do more to help keep jobs in this country. No other bill we can pass in this Congress would do more to help more people than this one will.

I urge the bill's passage.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS), whose knowledge of new markets tax credits is second to none in this institution.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD two letters: one from the National Education Association and one from the American Council on Education.

NOVEMBER 15, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association (NEA), and the 50 million

students they serve, we urge you to Vote No on the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1), a rewrite of the U.S. tax code being voted on this week. This multi-trillion dollar plan is a tax giveaway to the wealthiest and corporations paid for on the backs of working families and students, and jeopardizes the ability of states and local communities to adequately fund public schools. Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Legislative Report Card for the 115th Congress.

Tax plans reveal the priorities of a nation and in a number of respects this one tells working and middle-class families, students, and educators that they must sacrifice in order to further enrich the wealthy and corporations. We oppose the bill as currently crafted for several reasons outlined below.

A GIVEAWAY TO THE WEALTHY AND CORPORATIONS SETS UP DRASTIC CUTS TO MEDICAID, MEDICARE, AND EDUCATION

Analysis of the Joint Committee on Taxation's estimate of H.R. 1's impact shows that the bill is overwhelmingly skewed to the wealthy. Households with annual incomes over \$1 million would receive 16 times the percentage increase in after-tax income as other taxpayers. In addition, 45 percent of the cost of the bill's tax cuts would go to households with incomes above \$500,000—less than one percent of filers. Meanwhile, JCT estimates show that taxes would actually increase for filers with incomes between \$20,000 and \$40,000 over the life of the bill.

For now, much of the tax cuts will be deficit-financed, but the budget resolution that helped pave the way for this plan previews the next phase: future legislation to cut the growing deficit caused by tax cuts by demanding cuts to critical services that help working people, children, seniors, and others—Medicaid, Medicare, education, and more. In fact, some of this impact will be immediate. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), without enacting subsequent legislation, the tax bill will trigger automatic spending cuts to pay for the tax changes under a "paygo" law. The CBO analysis concludes that Medicare would face an FY18 reduction of \$25 billion with a remaining \$111 billion to be sequestered from remaining mandatory programs.

Kansas provides a window into what this approach looks like. In 2012, the state's former governor pushed through similar massive tax cuts to individuals and businesses that allegedly would boost the economy. In reality, Kansas' job growth was anemic and the governor and legislature starved state services. Kansas cut funding for public schools, infrastructure, and other services, and scrambled to close a \$350-million budget deficit. After voters spoke at the ballot box, lawmakers reversed course, raising taxes and overriding—in a bipartisan manner—the governor's veto. Rather than rushing forward with a partisan bill, Congress would do well to heed the recent lesson from America's heartland.

ELIMINATING SALT DEDUCTION IS A TAX INCREASE AND WILL DEVASTATE EDUCATION FUNDING

H.R. 1 would eliminate most of the state and local tax deduction (SALT)—taking money out of the pockets of as many 44 million middle-class families across the nation. While the bill hammers middle-class families on this, it oddly preserves the ability of businesses to deduct state and local taxes—yet another example of how the bill takes from working families to provide tax giveaways to those who are wealthier.

Eliminating any part of the state and local tax deduction could lead to a tax increase on middle class families and have a negative, ripple effect on the ability of states and local communities to fund public services, like

education. That could translate into cuts to public schools, lost jobs to educators, and overcrowded classrooms that deprive students of one-on-one attention.

NEA conducted a detailed analysis of the plan to eliminate most of SALT. In total, education funding could take a \$250 billion cut over the next 10 years and put up to 250,000 education jobs at risk. It is no secret what is likely to follow if Congress eliminates SALT. If there is any doubt, one need only to listen to what far-right groups like ALEC are saying right now. Their letter about the SALT deduction lays out their plan—to lobby for lower taxes at the state and local level. This means even fewer available funds for students and public education. TURNING POPULAR 529 COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN INTO A VOUCHER-LIKE SCHEME FOR THE WEALTHY

The tax plan distorts a popular education tax program for middle-class families by creating a voucher scheme with no income limits that is aimed at benefitting the wealthy to set aside up to \$10,000 annually in a tax-free account for private school expenses. Both the Heritage Foundation and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos agree, noting to the Washington Post that the backdoor voucher plan is "... a good step forward ..." in allowing public dollars to follow children to private school. Make no mistake. This poorly veiled voucher program will only benefit the wealthiest families who can already afford private school tuition at the expense of our students, communities, and taxpayers. In the end, no matter what form or name a voucher program takes, the impact is the same. This risky voucher program will hurt students and neighborhood schools—where 90 percent of children attend.

ELIMINATION OF THE MODEST EDUCATOR TAX DEDUCTION

While offering huge giveaways for wealthy individuals and corporations, the plan inexplicably eliminates the popular educator tax deduction that allows educators to deduct eligible unreimbursed out-of-pocket classroom spending—books, paper, pencils, and art supplies purchased to supplement meager school budgets—up to \$250 annually. The popular plan made "permanent" by Congress just two years ago, was claimed on 3.7 million tax returns in 2015. Almost every educator pays out of pocket for school supplies. The most recent study by the National School Supplies and Equipment Association (NSSEA) estimated that public school educators spent \$1.6 billion of their own money during the 2012-2013 school year on classroom supplies. An estimated 99 percent of public school teachers spent some amount of money out of pocket for their classrooms, with typical amounts ranging from \$500-\$1,000.

MAKING COLLEGE EVEN MORE COSTLY FOR FAMILIES

The plan also eliminates the student loan interest deduction. This is bad news for students and families. Under current rules, borrowers paying off education loans can annually deduct up to \$2,500 of interest paid on student loans. H.R. 1 essentially raises the long-term cost of attending college by eliminating the deductions for interest paid on student loans. According to the IRS, over 12 million individuals claimed this deduction in 2015. Further, the bill eliminates a provision that allows universities to waive tuition for graduate students. Graduate students would be taxed on the value of that tuition as if it were income, making it almost impossible for many students to afford graduate degrees. In a time of rising college costs and skyrocketing student loan debt, it is unthinkable to take away provisions that assists students and families struggling to pay for college.

ELIMINATING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BONDS PROGRAM

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program has proven to be an efficient and cost-effective way to help disadvantaged communities address pressing renovation and repair needs in schools. Investors receive a federal tax credit equal to the amount of interest payable on the bonds, thereby relieving local taxpayers and municipalities of the interest burden. A school that is awarded a QZAB may use the funds to renovate and repair buildings, invest in equipment, and update technology which are all vital to student well-being and success. Eliminating this program will only ensure that more and more students will go to school in yesterday's buildings with out-of-date technology and often unsafe, crumbling infrastructures.

PUTTING STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC PENSIONS FUNDING AT RISK

Section 5001 of H.R. 1 could subject certain investment of state and local government pension plans to the unrelated business income tax (UBIT). Investment earnings pay for approximately two-thirds of state and local government pension benefits, which are taxed when distributed to participants. In addition to the revenue lost from the tax itself, subjecting these pension plans to UBIT could pose significant and complex compliance costs that could dramatically affect pension funds. Further, the UBIT will result in a drag on these critically important investment returns, sets a dangerous precedent for taxation of state entities, and will ultimately increase costs to taxpayers.

REWRITING THE TAX CODE SHOULD NOT BE RUSHED

In 1986, Congress undertook a yearlong, bipartisan effort to deliberately and carefully rewrite the tax code. Measured consideration should again be taken in understanding the near-term and long-term impacts a tax code rewrite will have on families, communities, and public services. Instead, Congressional leadership is rushing the process and putting forward a bill that further tilts the scale in favor of the wealthy and corporations, and paid for by working families. For all of the reasons outlined above, we urge you to Vote No on H.R. 1.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,

*Director of Government Relations,
National Education Association.*

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, November 6, 2017.

Re Higher Education Provisions in H.R. 1,
the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
*Chairman, Ways and Means Committee,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
*Ranking Member, Ways and Means Committee,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEMBER NEAL: On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations, we write to express grave concerns with H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

This legislation, taken in its entirety, would discourage participation in postsecondary education, make college more expensive for those who do enroll, and undermine the financial stability of public and private, two-year and four-year colleges and universities. According to the Committee on Ways and Means summary, the bill's provisions would increase the cost to students attending college by more than \$65 billion between 2018 and 2027. This is not in America's national interest.

It is possible to offer tax relief to hard-working middle-class and lower-income

Americans in a way that does not increase college costs and does not make a quality higher education less accessible. We are eager to work with Congress to enact such legislation, but this bill heads in the wrong direction.

Our main objections to the bill are listed below, in the order in which they appear in the legislation. The order is not meant to reflect prioritization:

Sec. 1002: Changes to the standardized deduction, which will reduce charitable contributions to our institutions;

Sec. 1002: Repeal of Lifetime Learning Credit, while not substantially increasing the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC);

Sec. 1204: Repeal of the Student Loan Interest Deduction (SLID);

Sec. 117(d): Repeal of the qualified tuition reduction;

Sec. 127: Repeal of educational assistance program;

Sec. 1303: Changes to the state and local tax (SALT) deduction, which will reduce state budgets and, in turn, funding for public higher education;

Sec. 3601: Termination of private activity bonds; and,

Sec. 5103: Creation of a new excise tax on endowments at private colleges and universities.

Colleges and universities also have a number of concerns about other provisions that would negatively impact students by lessening charitable giving, limiting university-industry partnerships, and compromising educational quality.

TITLE I—TAX REFORM FOR INDIVIDUALS

SUBTITLE A—SIMPLIFICATION AND REFORM OF RATES, STANDARD DEDUCTION, AND EXEMPTIONS

Sec. 1002. Enhancement of the standard deduction

Colleges and universities are concerned that doubling the standard deduction for individuals and couples will reduce the number of taxpayers who itemize, significantly reducing the value of the charitable deduction and leading to a drop in donations to all nonprofits, including colleges and universities. For private nonprofit and public colleges and universities, the charitable deduction is vital for generating private support to higher education institutions to help achieve their educational missions of teaching, research, and public service. While the bill preserves a modest charitable giving incentive, its value would be significantly curtailed and charitable giving would decline to all nonprofits, which provide essential services to all Americans. We are disappointed that the bill did not include a proposal that would expand the charitable deduction to non-itemizers, like the universal charitable deduction.

SUBTITLE C—SIMPLIFICATION AND REFORM OF EDUCATION INCENTIVES

Sec. 1201. The American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC)

H.R. 1 would repeal the Lifetime Learning Credit, while only expanding AOTC to include a fifth year of reduced support. This would be a large step backwards, not an improvement, for many students and their families who benefit under current law. We appreciate that the bill maintains the expanded eligible expenses of the AOTC, which includes required course materials, as well as the current income thresholds. But we are extremely concerned that the “enhanced” AOTC, as written, would preclude graduate students, part-time students, lifelong learners (particularly those seeking retraining), and any student taking longer than five years to finish their education from access-

ing the AOTC, adversely impacting their financial ability to pursue a degree or lifelong learning. Indeed, under the changes proposed in the bill, many non-traditional students—the fastest growing segment of students in higher education—would lose significant tax benefits they currently rely upon to help finance their higher education.

Sec. 1204. Repeal of other provisions relating to education

The legislation as written would repeal the current Student Loan Interest Deduction (SLID). Under current law, any individual with income up to \$80,000 (or \$160,000 on a joint return) repaying student loans can currently deduct up to \$2,500 in student loan interest paid. In 2014, 12 million taxpayers benefited from SLID. Eliminating this provision would mean that, over the next decade, the cost of student loans for borrowers would increase by roughly \$13 billion.

H.R. 1 would also repeal two important provisions meant to exclude tuition waivers and tuition exemptions from income for campus employees and graduate students.

Section 117(d) permits educational institutions to provide their employees, spouses, or dependents with tuition reductions that are excluded from taxable income, helping them afford a college education and providing an important benefit to many middle- and lower-income college employees.

Section 117(d)(5) is also an important provision that reduces the cost of graduate education and mitigates the tax liability of graduate students teaching and researching as part of their academic programs. Roughly 145,000 graduate students received a tuition reduction in 2011–2012. Repeal of this provision would result in thousands of graduate students being subjected to a major tax increase. The provision is also critical to the research endeavor at major universities, particularly in the crucial science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. According to data from the Department of Education, 57 percent of tuition reductions went to graduate students in STEM programs.

Section 127 allows employers to offer employees up to \$5,250 annually in tuition assistance, which is excluded from taxable income. This provision has been an important means of building and adding to the competencies of the workforce and is a critical tool to help our nation accelerate its economic growth.

For all of these reasons, we strongly believe that Sections 117(d) and 127 should be preserved.

SUBTITLE D—SIMPLIFICATION AND REFORM OF DEDUCTIONS

Sec. 1303. Repeal of deduction for certain taxes not paid or accrued in a trade or business

Changes to the state and local tax (SALT) deduction will have a significant negative effect on state budgets, forcing state governments to make very difficult and harmful funding decisions. The SALT deduction helps state and local governments fund public services that provide widely shared benefits. Limiting the deduction will almost certainly make it harder for states and localities—many of which already face serious budget strains—to raise sufficient revenues in the coming years to fund higher education and other priorities. There has been a long-term decline in state support for higher education and cuts to SALT will exacerbate this problem. Cuts in state support for public higher education can lead to increased tuition and potentially cuts to state student financial aid programs, raising the cost of attending college for students and their families. History has shown that when states need to make cuts, support for higher education is often a primary target.

TITLE III—BUSINESS TAX REFORM

SUBTITLE G—BOND REFORMS

Sec. 3601. Termination of private activity bonds

H.R. 1 would eliminate private activity bonds, which are used by private nonprofit colleges and universities to finance capital projects. This repeal would essentially prevent institutions from using lower-cost tax-exempt bond financing. Higher borrowing costs can result in diminished investments in infrastructure, fewer jobs, reduced services, and increased service charges and other fees to students.

TITLE V—EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS

SUBTITLE B—EXCISE TAXES

Sec. 5103. Excise tax based on investment income of private colleges and universities

H.R. 1 fundamentally changes the way nonprofits are treated by creating a new and unprecedented tax on endowments of some private colleges and universities. This provision undermines the very nature of the tax-exempt status of private colleges and universities. While the new excise tax is currently focused on private institutions, we strongly oppose this new excise tax and the precedent it sets for all of higher education.

Investment income from endowments is used every day to support nearly every aspect of an institution's operations, including all the components vital to its mission and the delivery of a high-quality, affordable education, from financial aid to research and student retention and success programs. An endowment is not a single entity that can be used for any purpose. Rather, it is a permanent investment fund consisting of often thousands of separate accounts designed for the needs of the present and the future. Under H.R. 1 potentially large amounts of endowment dollars would be redirected to the federal government, taking them away from providing scholarships to our students and supporting research and education. It also would effectively be a tax on donors' contributions and shift money from the dedicated purpose for the donation. Roughly 160 institutions will likely be affected by this provision, and we strongly object to it.

For all of these reasons, we cannot support H.R. 1 and strongly oppose the proposed changes outlined above.

Sincerely,

TED MITCHELL,
President.

On behalf of:

ACPA—College Student Educators International, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), American Association of Community Colleges, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Association of University Professors, American Council on Education, American Dental Education Association, American Psychological Association.

APPA, “Leadership in Educational Facilities”, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Association of American Medical Colleges, Association of American Universities, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Association of Community College Trustees, Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, Association of Research Libraries.

Association of Teacher Educators, College and University Professional Association for Human Resources, Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, Council for Advancement and Support of

Education, Council for Christian Colleges & Universities, Council for Higher Education Accreditation, Council of Graduate Schools, Council of Independent Colleges, Council on Governmental Relations, Council on Social Work Education.

EDUCAUSE, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, National Adult Learner Coalition, National Association for College Admission Counseling, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, National Association of College and University Business Officers, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, National Collegiate Athletic Association, The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), Thurgood Marshall College Fund, UNCF (United Negro College Fund), UPCEA.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax bill is a dangerous bill that raises taxes on 36 million middle class households; takes healthcare from tens of millions of Americans; skyrockets the cost of health insurance for all Americans, but especially for those who are sick or have preexisting conditions; and directly results in cuts to Medicare and safety net spending next year—all to give corporate special interests immediate, permanent, and monumental tax cuts.

Cut, cut, cut is all that I have heard this week: cut the safety net; cut service for the needy; cut service for the physically challenged; cut the poor; cut the homeless; cut Medicaid; cut education; cut out low-income tax credits; cut out new market tax credits; cut out social services; cut block grants; cut student loans.

Winter is here. Cut the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. If you live in Chicago, Minneapolis, the Midwest, or the Northeast, without any heat, you are subject to catch pneumonia and die. There is no doubt about it.

I can imagine that college residents, hospital administrators, and managers of programs are wringing their hands, wondering what they are going to do.

I heard a minister last Sunday at one of the churches in my community asking this, and he said: Pray, organize, vote.

Vote against this bill.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN), chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge our incredible chairman and his leadership over the last 7 years I have been here and working this plan forward. It is an exciting time for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, legislation to provide tax relief to middle class families and small-business owners across America.

As a businessman for more than 30 years, I have had the opportunity to employ thousands of workers. I have

seen firsthand how broken our tax system can be for many hardworking Americans.

Under this bill, not only will the average family of four receive a tax cut, but small businesses will finally be taxed at a lower rate to help them expand and grow jobs in America.

According to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, this bill will create 1 million new jobs and grow the economy by 4 percent, a growth rate this country hasn't experienced since 2000.

It is time to give all Americans a break in terms of their taxes. With passage of this bill, we will finally have the opportunity to help middle class families and get our economy back on track.

I urge support for this critical bill to cut taxes and reform our tax system.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS), one of the most knowledgeable members of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than a hit job on middle America to pay for a massive tax cut for corporate America. The only certainty from this charade is slower economic growth, more income inequality, and exploding budget deficits.

When you take away tax relief from sick people who were born into illness and for whom insurance doesn't provide enough coverage, that is a hit on middle America.

When you remove help for people who are just trying to make college affordable, who are trying to make themselves better, that is a hit on middle America.

□ 1015

And when you take away healthcare from 13 million Americans and raise the cost for millions more because you needed another \$300 billion to give more to corporate America, that is a hit on middle America.

And when 152,000 people from my community and millions more from New York lose 100 years of protection from State and local taxes, protection worth more than \$8,000 per household, that is a hit on my community, it is a hit on New York State, and it is a hit on each and every community in America.

And when you take away the essential needs of middle America to feed the rapacious needs of corporate America, it is a hit on fundamental fairness, and that, Mr. Speaker, is a hit on all of America.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, we know that the economic and job creation benefits are key components of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, making the U.S. globally competitive again, giving much-needed tax cuts to American business, and much-needed wage increases to American workers. But, Mr.

Speaker, it is really the long overdue direct tax benefits to the vast middle class, who don't have a lobbyist living in the rich suburbs of Washington, D.C., that take center stage for me and my fellow North Dakotans.

You see, 80 percent of the citizens of North Dakota file claiming this standard deduction. That means, Mr. Speaker, that the vast majority of my constituents will see their deductions nearly doubled if they do nothing else. And obviously, with the doubling of the standard deduction, it will likely inspire even more North Dakotans to claim this simple deduction.

Mr. Speaker, this huge benefit, combined with greater job opportunities and simpler, less expensive filing costs, and, of course, a generous family tax credit, will put more money in the pockets and less anxiety in the hearts of middle class North Dakotans. Supporting this reform package is easy for me because it is right for North Dakota, and I thank Chairman BRADY for this outstanding work.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), a very successful businesswoman in her own right, who understands the modern economy.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, in this Ryan-McConnell tax bill, Republicans are touting the largest set of corporate tax cuts in our country's history. They are raving that their corporate cuts will create jobs, even though we know that trickle-down economics has never worked and never will.

Instead of bringing Democrats and the public into the process, Republicans have made the most cynical tradeoffs, only hurting people who need help the most.

This is wrong. Tax reform should be about coming together and making choices that reflect our values.

Yet, under this plan, teachers, who buy supplies for their students, like pens, pencils, and paper, will lose the ability to deduct those costs from their tax returns, but corporations still can deduct supply costs.

Firefighters will no longer be able to deduct their State and local income or sales taxes, but corporations still can.

Homeowners will no longer be able to deduct all of their property taxes, but corporations still can.

And if workers have to move because their employer is forcing them to relocate their families or lose their jobs, they will no longer be able to deduct their moving expenses, but corporations, even those offshoring jobs, still can.

This bill increases taxes on 36 million working families and rips away key lifelines that help people struggling with long-term illness, childcare, and education expenses. It blows a \$1.5 trillion hole in the deficit and burdens our children and grandchildren with debt, triggering an automatic \$25 billion cut to Medicare. This bill gives massive permanent tax cuts to corporations,

but working families will have to live with the temporary scraps thrown at them.

Bottom line: this bill hurts Americans from cradle to retirement, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), one of the leaders of the Tax Policy Subcommittee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY and all the members of the Ways and Means staff who have worked tirelessly in order to bring this bill forward.

I can't tell you how excited I am to be here today. My friend, Mr. LARSON, I notice he wears a pin with a picture of John Kennedy, one of my favorite Presidents of all time.

Let me just read from a speech that President Kennedy gave on December 14, 1962. This is 55 years ago, and he gave it in an address to the Economic Club of New York.

"Our true choice is not between tax reduction, on the one hand, and the avoidance of large Federal deficits on the other. It is increasingly clear that no matter what party is in power, so long as our national security needs keep rising, an economy hampered by restrictive tax rates will never produce enough revenues to balance our budget—just as it will never produce enough jobs or enough profits.

"... only full employment can balance the budget, and tax reduction can pave the way to that employment. The purpose of cutting taxes now is not to incur a budget deficit, but to achieve the more prosperous, expanding economy, which can bring a budget surplus."

Keeping that in mind—and I hear the debate going back and forth—I would just encourage all of our Members: you are going to have a choice today to take your voting card, and you are going to put it in the voting machine, and you can push a green button that says "go," putting this Nation back on track, making America the greatest economic power in the world; or you can push the red button and say: you know what, just not something I can vote for today because it is just not exactly what I want.

Next week, 50 million Americans will travel because they want to come home; they want to come home for the holidays; they want to come home for Thanksgiving. This bill is a Thanksgiving bill. This is a jobs bill because what we are telling corporate America is we want you to come home. We want to make this a more favorable environment for you to live, to work, to succeed, because we know that true success in business is only a sustainable business model.

So when you tax people at the highest rate in the industrialized world, when you regulate people that puts them in an uncompetitive advantage on the shelf, they can't exist, and so where do they go? They have to leave

home to go overseas to find that answer.

Now, I just want to go over some things that really are important. A friend of mine by the name of George Abraham, who is a basketball coach—George and I were talking one day, and we were talking about the value of winning. And George said to me: You know what, MIKE, the only position you want to be in is the number one position.

And I said: Really?

He goes: Yes. Because anything other than finishing first is you finish with the rest.

If you were to take a survey, and Forbes did, and they said: If you were starting a business today, where would you start that business?

And right away, I would say: Are you kidding me? It is the United States of America because of who we are, our greatness.

And no, there are 22 other countries that people say I would rather go someplace else than do it right here in America. That is incredible. And when we talk about where we are as a people—where we are as a people—listen to these figures. These are not my figures, by the way. This is the Tax Foundation:

Cuts for Americans at every economic level;

Reduces taxes by almost \$1,200 for every average-size middle-income American family;

Reduces taxes by almost \$2,000 for every average-size middle-income family in Pennsylvania's Third District;

Grows national GDP by 3.5 percent;

Increases American wages by 2.7 percent;

Increases after-tax income for every taxpayer by 3.8 percent in the long run;

Increases after-tax incomes for median families in Pennsylvania by over \$2,300;

Creates almost 900,000 new American jobs; and

Creates, in my State of Pennsylvania, over 36,000 new jobs.

So I say, this is a jobs bill. This is a revenue raiser for us. This is about bringing people back home. This is about more take-home pay for every hardworking American guy and gal who is out there who gets up every day and gets up to do one thing, and that is, to protect their families and work in the interest of their country.

I am just asking you today to look at this card and know that you have within the power of your vote to unleash the greatest economy in the world, to unshackle it from a Tax Code that makes it impossible to compete globally, that overregulates it and forces it offshore, and then blames them for leaving.

This is a "come on back home." This is a "don't leave home; stay here; we are on your side; we are going to work with you; and we are going to get there."

I ask my friends on both sides of the aisle: Let's do what is right for America. If it is right for America, it is right

for Republicans, it is right for Democrats, it is right for Independents, it is right for Libertarians, it is right for America.

This is the right time to do the right thing. My friends, we cannot stay where we are. A standpat hand is a nonwinning hand. The ability to move forward, the ability to absolutely not just participate in a global economy but dominate a global economy and give every single American the faith and a future and restore the faith they need to have in this body that we are doing the best thing in their interest every single day that we come here.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have Mr. KELLY—as he describes sports teams, we discovered he is a closet Patriots fan.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU), whose history, in terms of revenue and revenue collection, is well known to the Congress.

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear about the GOP tax scam: corporate interests get a huge giveaway. They get a windfall tax break. Who pays for it? The middle class. Who wins? Corporations, billionaires, millionaires, the Trump family. Who loses? Women, families, seniors, teachers, students.

As a former Los Angeles Community College teacher of 20 years, I can't believe what Republicans are doing to students. They rip away critical benefits that help our students pay for their college education. They eliminate the student loan interest deductions and choose to tax graduate students on money they have never even received by taxing the tuition assistance they get for working for their schools.

This bill even pinches students when they are still in elementary school by taxing their teachers who claim a deduction for the school supplies they pay for out of their own paycheck. One teacher in my area even pays for the ink in her classroom printer. They don't ask to be repaid, just to be able to deduct the expense.

If corporations get to keep this deduction, why not our teachers? And then if that is not cruel enough, they eliminate the deduction for extraordinary medical expenses for those with Alzheimer's and cancer. And this week we learn that Republicans plan to pay for these corporate cuts by causing 13 million people to lose their health insurance, a move that will increase premiums by 10 percent and result in individuals with preexisting conditions losing access to lifesaving affordable coverage.

Then Republicans eliminate the State and local tax deduction, which is used by over 6 million California households, to prevent their hard-earned dollars from being taxed twice. Of all the States, Californians will actually face the largest net tax increase

from this bill of \$12.1 billion in 2027 alone.

California Republicans who vote for this bill ought to be ashamed of themselves, and the voters need to hold them accountable. Thirty-six million middle class families will be stuck holding the bag under this plan. For what? For tax cuts for corporate interests. This is unacceptable.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI), one of our key members of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. First of all, I want to thank President Trump for making this a priority, but I especially want to thank Chairman BRADY for his tireless efforts and leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor today.

Three decades ago, there was a 24-year-old starting a business in Ohio. He borrowed money and started hiring people. As he grew his business, he didn't take a paycheck and kept hiring hardworking middle class Americans. But then, as he started looking over things, he couldn't hire anymore, because of the tremendous tax bill owed to the Federal Government.

That is what small business entrepreneurs face in today's tax environment. That 24-year-old was me. Luckily, I was a certified public accountant. I was able to figure out a way to make my business work and grow without our suffocating Tax Code or through our suffocating Tax Code.

Unfortunately, most small-business owners do not experience the Tax Code complexities until they get started. They have an idea, they start their business, and then the government steps in; and they are not CPAs.

If my three children were to ask me today if they should risk and start a business, I would be hesitant to push them down that path, which is why I support H.R. 1, which lowers the tax rate for businesses and gives hardworking taxpayers a break. This bill puts more money in their pockets to do with it what is important to them, those hardworking taxpayers, not letting the government take it and waste it.

□ 1030

Lowering the individual rate will give Americans the opportunity to choose where they want to spend their money instead of banking on a government to spend it for them.

On the business side, the harsh reality is that America has become an uncompetitive place to do business. With the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world, it should not be a surprise that businesses are relocating to countries with better business climates. Fortunately, by bringing our rate down to 20 percent, we can make America one of the most competitive countries in the world to do business.

It is hard for U.S. companies to compete against companies based in Can-

ada, where the Federal income tax rate is 15 percent, Ireland at 12.5 percent, or even the U.K., which will be 17 percent by 2020. Businesses set their prices to be competitive. The U.S. has to set its business rate to compete, as well.

The high corporate tax rate is not just a Wall Street problem; it is a Main Street problem. Business entities do not pay taxes; people do.

The burden of the corporate tax rate falls on three categories of people: shareholders, customers, and employees. Corporations do not pay taxes; we do.

This bill helps companies compete, hire more people, and give them a more competitive wage. This bill gives individuals more money to spend on what they want, not what the government wants. This bill simplifies the Tax Code for hardworking Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this historic reform so more Americans can choose where their money goes, not Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 1. Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), a Marshall Scholar and attorney.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to reject this misguided and mean-spirited tax bill that is being rushed through this Congress today.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican sham tax bill picks winners and losers. The winners under this tax bill are corporations, Wall Street fat cats, the top 1 percent of the highest wage earners in America, and the special interests. The losers are the middle class, working families, students, the most vulnerable in our society, and our farmers.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the National Farmers Union, which objects to this bill.

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION,
November 14, 2017.

CONGRESSIONAL TAX PLANS JEOPARDIZE THE
FARM SAFETY NET, CBO ANALYSIS SAYS
For Immediate Release.

Contact: Andrew Jerome.

WASHINGTON.—Amidst the steepest drop in farm profitability in a generation, U.S. Congressional leadership is proposing tax reform legislation that would jeopardize all funding for farm bill commodity safety net programs.

The two tax bills being considered in both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives would add \$1.5 trillion to the federal deficit. According to new Congressional Budget Office analysis of the bills, that \$1.5 trillion deficit increase would need to be offset by eliminating all funding for vital farm programs such as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), among other mandatory federal spending programs.

"If Congress passes legislation that increases the deficit, they will subsequently be forced to cut federal spending. In the case of the tax bill, current law could require 100 percent sequestration of all commodity program payments and other farm bill programs," said National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson "Tax cuts for the highest income brackets should absolutely not come at the expense of programs that pro-

tect our nation's family farmers and ranchers."

The House and Senate budget resolution that was passed earlier this year paves the way for tax cuts that would increase the U.S. federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion over ten years. Statutory pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) rules require that increases in deficit spending be offset by reduced spending across non-exempt mandatory programs. The government would be required to cut such programs by \$150 billion per year in accordance with PAYGO.

The total available pool of funding across all non-exempt mandatory programs amounts to, in CBO's estimation, "only between \$85 billion to \$90 billion," meaning that all impacted mandatory spending programs other than Medicare, including the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), would be entirely stripped of funding.

The CCC is the second largest non-exempt mandatory program, after Medicare. It funds dairy and other farm program payments, including ARC and PLC, both of which are critical for keeping family farmers and ranchers in business during times of economic uncertainty. Discretionary spending and a number of mandatory programs, including Social Security, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), federal crop insurance, and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), are exempt from PAYGO. "Farmers Union has long opposed using budget sequestration to reduce the federal deficit, especially through cuts to agricultural programs," added Johnson. "This proposal asks farmers and ranchers to trade any possible tax benefits for the elimination of farm safety net payments, like ARC and PLC. That would be a disastrous trade. NFU continues to advocate for a simplified, progressive tax code that does not risk programs vital to the livelihoods and well-being of American family farmers and ranchers."

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. These are the very same people that this President promised to benefit.

This is what this bill does for corporate America:

It dramatically cuts rates from the largest companies in the world, moving the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 20 percent.

It creates loopholes for wealthy individuals to recharacterize their wage income as small business income so that they can pay less in taxes.

It repeals the alternative minimum tax, which captures the tax liabilities for wealthy individuals. In fact, the only tax return that we have ever seen of Mr. Trump was his 2005 tax return in which he had to pay \$38 million. Why? Because of AMT.

And this tax bill will also permanently repeal the estate tax, which only affects 5,500 households in America. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, none of those households are in my district.

In contrast, how will this tax bill impact the middle class? Mr. Speaker, 36 million middle class households will pay more taxes. One in four taxpayers will pay more taxes.

To pay for the corporate tax cuts, this bill will hurt working families. It will eliminate deductions on interest on student loans. It will eliminate medical expense deductions, which many, many households use to pay for long-term care needs. It will eliminate

the lifetime learning credit. And it will also do away with deductions for families that pay for daycare and aging parents.

Mr. Speaker, this is not comprehensive tax reform. The American people deserve better, and we as a Congress can do better.

Please reject this bill.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY for his leadership.

Today is a huge victory for working Americans. Today, we take a giant step forward to deliver more jobs, fairer taxes, and bigger paychecks for working Hoosiers. This bill will create thousands of jobs in Indiana, and it will give the typical working family a \$1,500 tax cut.

The Trump tax plan also includes a provision that I authored to stop \$4 billion to \$7 billion in refundable child tax credits paid out to illegal immigrants each year. These savings help expand the child tax credit for working American families by \$600 per child.

Hoosiers get it: no one should get a tax incentive to violate the law.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this plan. It will give working Hoosiers a pay raise, bring back jobs from overseas, and get our economy moving again.

I also urge the Senate to act and keep their promise to the American people.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article about this bill's impact on graduate students in my district.

[From the Atlanta Journal Constitution, Nov. 16, 2017]

OPINION: ONLY WEALTHY CAN AFFORD GRAD SCHOOL UNDER HOUSE TAX PLAN UP FOR VOTE TODAY

(By Maureen Downey)

Jenny C. Bledsoe is a fifth-year Ph.D. candidate in English at Emory University, specializing in medieval literature. She was featured in a New York Times story last week that examined how the GOP House tax plan would impact a range of American students. In this essay, Bledsoe focuses on the change that makes graduate tuition waivers taxable income.

The tax plan is expected to come to the House floor today where passage is predicted. The Senate, however, is not expected to take up its own tax bill until after Thanksgiving. And then House and Senate conferees will have to hammer out their differences and come up with a compromise plan.

Under the House plan, Bledsoe and other doctoral students would be hurt by a new provision that would tax graduate students on tuition waivers granted them in exchange for working as teaching assistants or researchers. The tax accountants hired by The New York Times estimated Bledsoe and her husband would pay an additional \$7,194 in taxes under the House tax bill.

When I about this last week, some readers contended the increase in the standard deduction will offset the eliminations of these education deductions. However, some reviews found that not to be true for graduate students.

IMPACT OF GOP TAX PLAN ON STUDENTS

(By Jenny C. Bledsoe)

The House GOP tax bill makes graduate school inaccessible for anyone who is not independently wealthy, and it will likely cause current graduate students to drop out of doctoral programs and/or declare bankruptcy.

A single line in the 429-page bill effects this change: 26 U.S. tax code §117(d) allows students conducting research or teaching for a university (usually Ph.D. students on fellowship) to receive tuition waivers tax free. Any stipends are taxed.

The House "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," however, will repeal this provision, meaning that a Ph.D. student making a stipend of \$24,000 will be taxed as if they are making \$85,200. This would have been my situation two years ago. During the first three years of Emory's Ph.D. program, a student currently receives a tuition waiver amounting to \$61,200. Once you reach "tuition-paid" status after your third year, the annual tuition is \$30,600.

Tax experts hired by The New York Times estimated that my husband's and my tax bill would increase by \$7,194—despite the increase in the standard deduction—because of the newly taxable tuition waiver.

Tuition amounts vary widely depending on the institution, and the situation may be worse (or better) for some individuals, depending on tuition rates and stipend amounts. At Georgia Tech, full-time graduate student tuition for one semester is \$6,894 in-state and \$14,284 out-of-state. Georgia State's tuition is \$4,680 in-state and \$15,012 out-of-state for one semester.

Graduate students will clearly owe much larger federal income tax bills, and in some states, including Georgia, they will also have to pay more due to the proposed changes to the federal tax credit for state and local income taxes. Those at private colleges and universities will be responsible for larger taxable amounts (given the higher tuition at private institutions).

Those at public universities will pay the taxes on their relatively lower tuition waiver amounts, but they will have to do so with already significantly smaller stipends than Ph.D. students receive at private universities.

This is an issue across the disciplines. It will affect any graduate student pursuing a Ph.D. on a research or teaching fellowship, which common for those pursuing doctorates in STEM, the social sciences, and the humanities. In addition to graduate students suffering personally, universities will experience the effects of their graduate students' tax burdens in multiple ways (in addition to the bill's other deleterious effects on higher education).

Graduate students will have less time for research because they will have to work additional jobs. Humanities Ph.D. students, who provide essential labor as instructors, will have less time to devote to the classes they teach to undergraduates.

Long-term effects are difficult to measure, but surely many lower-income students will no longer attend. It's unlikely that international students will be able to maintain a decent standard of living since they are often forbidden from taking on additional work.

The House GOP tax bill will lead to a "brain drain," with international students and Americans alike seeking graduate study elsewhere or not at all. In terms of personal fi-

nance, it will be extremely challenging (if not impossible) to meet one's basic needs—food, shelter—while pursuing a higher degree.

Unless . . . you're independently wealthy. This single line in a massive tax bill destroys lower- and middle-class young Americans' ability to pursue a professional career in academia, industry, or government. The bill reduces other education tax credits, which will adversely affect access to undergraduate as well as graduate education. The GOP will effectively end class mobility, return the academy fully to the so-called one percent, and reduce charitable donations to universities by de-incentivizing itemized deductions.

Even if you don't believe in the value of academic study, eliminating section 117(d) of the U.S. tax code would be bad for the economy. Those who were not independently wealthy and who chose to pursue graduate studies anyway would have to do so with the help of student loans. Student loans are with you forever; student loan debt is not forgiven even when bankruptcy is declared. Young Americans are already saddled with too much debt, causing many opinion pieces to complain about the latest store or product that "millennials have killed" by not spending enough money.

Eliminating this line of tax code effectively condemns those who pursue higher education to a life of debt servitude. How is our economy, our country, our world to progress with these barriers against access to education, an essential asset in our dynamic world?

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, also, I include in the RECORD letters of opposition from the ACLU, Baptist Joint Committee, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

ACLU,

Washington, DC, November 3, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY, RANKING MEMBER NEAL, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS:

ACLU STRONGLY OPPOSES UNCONSTITUTIONAL RELIGIOUS FAVORITISM PROVISION IN H.R. 1

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is strongly opposed to Sec. 5201 in H.R. 1, the so-called Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This provision is designed—in violation of the Constitution—to give religious organizations special tax benefits and privileges that are unavailable to all other, non-religious 501(c)(3) organizations. Accordingly, we urge that this unconstitutional provision be removed from the bill.

Sec. 5201 would allow a house of worship to endorse one or more candidates in all of its statements, presentations, and teachings made during "religious services or gatherings." While current law applies to all tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, this provision would apply only to churches. The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was designed to prevent exactly this kind of religious favoritism. See, e.g. *Texas Monthly v. Bullock*, 489 U.S. 1 (1989) (striking down tax exemption that applied only to religious periodicals). Moreover, the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment prohibits laws that engage in this type of viewpoint discrimination. See *Rosenberger v. Rector & Visitors of the Univ. of Va.*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995) (invalidating a subsidy program that distinguished between religious and nonreligious viewpoints)

Sec. 5201 includes a vague and undefined test that would open up houses of worship to extensive government entanglement. To determine whether a house of worship is complying with the law, the IRS would have to determine whether an endorsement (1) occurred during the “ordinary course” of the organization’s “regular and customary activities” in carrying out its “tax-exempt purpose;” (2) whether it amounted to a “de minimis incremental expense,” and (3) whether it took place during “religious services or gatherings.” To determine whether a house of worship meets this test, the IRS would have to investigate the house of worship’s books, activities, sermons, and correspondence. The IRS would also have to judge whether an event is “religious” and part of a house of worship’s “exempt purpose.” By inviting this type of invasive government scrutiny of church documents and judgment about religion, this provision actually threatens, rather than upholds, the autonomy and independence of houses of worship.

Churches and religious leaders are already able to exercise their free speech—free from fear of sanction by the IRS—by speaking out on political and social issues. Church leaders are also completely free to support or endorse political candidates as private citizens. As an organization deeply committed since our founding nearly 100 years ago to protecting the free speech rights of all people, the ACLU would vigorously oppose any effort to chill the ability of houses of worship and religious leaders to speak out on what they see as the important issues of the day.

That does not mean, however, that religious organizations are entitled to receive special tax benefits and privileges that are unavailable to all other 501(c)(3) organizations. The ACLU strongly opposes Sec. 5201 and urges the removal of this unconstitutional provision from the so-called Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1).

Please feel free to contact Ian Thompson, legislative representative, with any questions.

Sincerely,

FAIZ SHAKIR,
National Political Director.

IAN THOMPSON,
Legislative Representative.

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE
FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY,
Washington, DC, November 6, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEMBER NEAL: On behalf of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC), an 81-year-old agency serving 15 Baptist bodies on legal and policy matters relating to religious liberty and the separation of church and state, I write to express strong opposition to Section 5201 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This provision seriously undermines the independence and integrity of our houses of worship and denominations by creating an exemption to the partisan campaign prohibition that applies equally to all 501(c)(3) organizations. This attempt to encourage certain religious organizations to engage in partisan

campaigning is constitutionally problematic following the Supreme Court’s application of the Establishment Clause in *Texas Monthly v. Bullock*.

We are committed to ensuring that the free speech rights for houses of worship and members of the clergy are respected. We do not share the view that current law prohibiting 501(c)(3) organizations from participating and intervening in partisan candidate campaigns infringes on those free speech rights. We joined with more than 100 other religious and denominational organizations in a letter to Congress, originally sent in April, saying we “strongly oppose any effort to weaken or eliminate protections in the law that prohibit 501(c)(3) organizations, including houses of worship, from endorsing or opposing political candidates.” The full letter is attached to my testimony.

In 2002, the House voted down legislation offered by Rep. Walter Jones, called the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act (H.R. 2357). The BJC co-lead the coalition of religious groups opposing that legislation, which failed by a House vote of 178–239. We continue to think there is no reason to change the way the law works now, and we are very concerned about the consequences of weakening the protection for houses of worship. For more than 60 years, all 501(c)(3) organizations have been required to refrain from partisan campaign involvement in exchange for receiving that most-favored tax status. The prohibition has allowed charitable organizations, including our houses of worship, to concentrate on their exempt purposes and not be distracted or co-opted by partisan campaigns.

Current law strikes the right balance in protecting the integrity and independence of our religious sector. The tax law prohibition is not a divorce of politics from houses of worship. Many churches feel that they are called to be “political” and to “speak truth to power” on a variety of social issues, and nothing in the tax law prevents pastors from speaking out from the pulpit on the issues, no matter how controversial.

Houses of worship can encourage voting, engage in voter registration drives, host candidate forums, distribute nonpartisan education materials, and invite all candidates for an office to speak during a worship service.

Pastors and other leaders can endorse and oppose candidates in their personal capacities and without using the resources of the church. Whether and how openly they want to do this is a personal decision. Pastors know that their reputations will rise and fall with individuals they endorse and therefore may be reluctant to publicly endorse and oppose candidates. They also consider the impact that their endorsements will have in their spiritual communities, particularly with those who may support another candidate.

But what is not permitted—and what most clergy and churchgoers don’t want in any event—is for the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) entity to endorse or oppose candidates. Polling consistently shows that large majorities—70 or 80 percent depending on the survey—oppose candidate endorsements in church. And when just clergy are asked, the numbers are more like 90 percent, including among evangelical pastors.

These numbers are not surprising given the negative effects endorsements would have on houses of worship. Pastors and churchgoers I

talk with think this would be a terrible idea for their congregations, dividing what are otherwise rather politically diverse communities and distracting them from their religious mission. Congregants also choose to worship in faith communities for reasons other than hearing a political ad. There are plenty of places in our culture today to engage in partisan electoral campaigns. Most people I know don’t want church to be one of those places.

We also recognize the powerful prophetic voice with which the church speaks to power. That voice is threatened whenever the church associates itself too closely with the government or its officials.

Creating an exemption for houses of worship would expose churches to political pressure to endorse candidates during primaries and elections at all political levels, as the campaign intervention prohibition applies not only to presidential and congressional elections but to every state and local race, too. Many candidates and donors supporting candidates would have a strong incentive to put pressure on churches to become involved in their campaigns, particularly given the highly-valued tax status churches enjoy. Donors to churches, like all other 501(c)(3) organizations, receive a tax deduction for their contributions. Churches also receive automatic 501(c)(3) tax status and are not required to file the Form 990 information return. Combining tax deductibility with these permissible accommodations for churches would make houses of worship particularly vulnerable targets for partisan campaign activity by political donors and others seeking to influence local, state, and national elections.

The legislative “solution” that has been put forward would threaten great harm to houses of worship. This bill injects a new subjective standard for the IRS to enforce, allowing political campaign involvement if it is “in the ordinary course of the organization’s regular and customary activities in carrying out its exempt purpose, and results in the organization incurring not more than de minimis incremental expenses.” What does “ordinary course” mean? What is the organization’s “regular and customary activities in carrying out its exempt purpose”? What is “de minimis” compared to the organization’s total budget? What is “incremental”? These are all line-drawing questions that would fall on the IRS, which would have a mandate to enforce this new standard with limited resources and with likely much more activity in this area, given the new permissible standard and political pressure to be involved. We would either see lack of enforcement, rendering the statutory limitations meaningless, or we would see troubling entanglement of the IRS in a church’s affairs. Neither outcome would be an improvement on our current system.

Jesus taught us to render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. Permitting tax-exempt churches to endorse candidates in a “sermon . . . or other presentation” during their “services or gatherings” threatens to fundamentally alter the very nature of and esteem for our religious sector. This approach does not bode well for religion or religious liberty.

Respectfully,

AMANDA TYLER,
Executive Director,
Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty.

Updated, November 1, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,

Speaker,

Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,

Senate Majority Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,

House Democratic Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK SCHUMER,

Senate Democratic Leader,

Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,

Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee,

Washington, DC.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,

Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance,

Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,

Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Com-

mittee, Washington, DC.

Hon. RON WYDEN,

Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Fi-

nance, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, MAJORITY LEADER

MCCONNELL, LEADER PELOSI, LEADER SCHU-

MER, CHAIRMAN BRADY, CHAIRMAN HATCH,

RANKING MEMBER NEAL, AND RANKING MEM-

BER WYDEN: We, the 103 undersigned religious

and denominational organizations strongly

oppose any effort to weaken or eliminate

protections that prohibit 501(c)(3) organiza-

tions, including houses of worship, from en-

dorsing or opposing political candidates.

Current law serves as a valuable safeguard

for the integrity of our charitable sector and

campaign finance system.

Religious leaders often use their pulpits to

address the moral and political issues of the

day. They also can, in their personal capaci-

ties and without the resources of their

houses of worship, endorse and oppose polit-

ical candidates. Houses of worship can en-

gage in public debate on any issue, host can-

didate forums, engage in voter registration

drives, encourage people to vote, help trans-

port people to the polls and even, with a few

boundaries, lobby on specific legislation and

invite candidates to speak. Tax-exempt

houses of worship may not, however, endorse

or oppose candidates or use their tax-exempt

donations to contribute to candidates' cam-

paigns. Current law simply limits groups

from being both a tax-exempt ministry and a

partisan political entity.

As religious organizations, we oppose any

attempt to weaken the current protections

offered by the 501(c)(3) campaign interven-

tion prohibition because:

People of faith do not want partisan polit-

ical fights infiltrating their houses of wor-

ship. Houses of worship are spaces for mem-

bers of religious communities to come to-

gether, not be divided along political lines;

faith ought to be a source of connection and

community, not division and discord. Indeed,

the vast majority of Americans do not want

houses of worship to issue political endorse-

ments. Particularly in today's political cli-

mate, such endorsements would be highly di-

visive and would have a detrimental impact

on civil discourse.

Current law protects the integrity of

houses of worship. If houses of worship en-

dorse candidates, their prophetic voice, their

ability to speak truth to power as political

outsiders, is threatened. The credibility and

integrity of congregations would suffer with

bad decisions of candidates they endorsed.

Tying America's houses of worship to par-

tisan activity demeans the institutions from

which so many believers expect unimpeach-

able decency.

Current law protects the independence of

houses of worship. Houses of worship often

speak out on issues of justice and morality

and do good works within the community

but may also labor to adequately fund their

ministries. Permitting electioneering in churches would give partisan groups incentive to use congregations as a conduit for political activity and expenditures. Changing the law would also make them vulnerable to individuals and corporations who could offer large donations or a politician promising social service contracts in exchange for taking a position on a candidate. Even proposals that would permit an "insubstantial" standard or allow limited electioneering only if it is in furtherance of an organization's mission would actually invite increased government intrusion, scrutiny, and oversight.

The charitable sector, particularly houses of worship, should not become another cog in a political machine or another loophole in campaign finance laws. We strongly urge you to oppose any efforts to repeal or weaken protections in the law for 501(c)(3) organizations, including houses of worship.

Sincerely,

African American Ministers in Action; African Methodist Episcopal Church—Social Action Commission; Alabama Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Alliance of Baptists; American Baptist Churches USA; American Baptist Home Mission Societies; American Friends Service Committee; American Jewish Committee (AJC); Anti-Defamation League; Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists; B'nai B'rith International; Baptist Center for Ethics; Baptist Fellowship Northeast; Baptist General Association of Virginia; Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty; Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America—Bautistas por la Paz; Baptist Women in Ministry; Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice; California Council of Churches IMPACT; Catholics for Choice.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; Central Conference of American Rabbis; Christian Life Commission; Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church; Churchnet, a ministry of the Baptist General Convention of Missouri; Colorado Council of Churches; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Heartland; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Kentucky; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Arkansas; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Florida; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Mississippi; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Oklahoma; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Texas; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship West; Disciples Center for Public Witness; Ecumenical Catholic Communion.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; The Episcopal Church; Equal Partners in Faith; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches; Faith Action Network—Washington State; Faith in Public Life; Faith Voices Arkansas; Faithful America; Florida Council of Churches; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.; Hindu American Foundation; Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas; Interfaith Alliance; International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON); Islamic Networks Group; Islamic Society of North America.

Jewish Community Relations Council, Greater Boston; Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington; Jewish Council for Public Affairs; The Jewish Federations of North America; Jewish Women International; Kentucky Council of Churches; Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Baptist Convention of America; National Council of Churches; National Council of Jewish Women; National Sikh Campaign; NET-

WORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; New Baptist Covenant; North Carolina Council of Churches; Oklahoma Conference of Churches; Pastors for Oklahoma Kids; Pastors for Texas Children; Pax Christi, Montgomery County, MD chapters; Pennsylvania Council of Churches.

Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office of Public Witness; Progressive National Baptist Convention; Reconstructionist Rabbinical Assembly; Religions for Peace USA; Religious Institute; Rhode Island State Council of Churches; Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America; South Carolina Christian Action Council; South Dakota Faith in Public Life; T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights; Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Texas Baptists Committed; Texas Faith Network; Texas Impact; Union for Reform Judaism; Unitarian Universalist Association; Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries; The United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society; Virginia Council of Churches; Women of Reform Judaism; Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER).

AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

Washington, DC, November 6, 2017.

Re Oppose Section 5201 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which Exempts Houses of Worship from the Johnson Amendment.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,

Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee,

Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,

Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Com-

mittee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEM-

BER NEAL: On behalf of Americans United for

Separation of Church and State, we urge you

to strip Section 5201 from H.R. 1, the Tax

Cuts and Jobs Act. This provision would ex-

empt houses of worship from the Johnson

Amendment, which is the six-decades-old law

that ensures tax-exempt organizations—in-

cluding houses of worship, charitable non-

profits, and foundations—do not endorse or

oppose political candidates. We join 103 reli-

gious and denomination organizations, more

than 4,200 faith leaders, and 5,500 nonprofits

organizations, in urging Members of Con-

gress to reject efforts, like the one in Sec-

tion 5201, to weaken or repeal the Johnson

Amendment.

Tax-exempt charities and houses of wor-

ship are granted special 501(c)(3) tax-exempt

status because they work for the common

good, not so they can support political can-

didates. Current law protects their right to

speak out about political and social issues

while, at the same time, ensuring they are

not pressured by political candidates and

campaigns seeking their own political gain.

Indeed, under current law, tax-exempt

houses of worship and the faith leaders who

represent them can speak to any issue or

piece of legislation they choose. And faith

leaders can endorse candidates in their per-

sonal capacity.

Exempting houses of worship from the law

would threaten their independence and in-

tegrity and open them up to pressure from

political candidates, donors, and congregants

who want to use them for their own political

gain. Furthermore, Section 5201 singles out

houses of worship for special treatment, vi-

olating the Constitution.

SECTION 5201 EXEMPTS HOUSES OF WORSHIP FROM THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT

Section 5201 allows houses of worship to endorse candidates so long the endorsement

is made during a religious service or gathering, is made in the ordinary course of their tax-exempt purpose, and does not incur more than a de minimis incremental expense. This would, in effect, exempt houses of worship from the Johnson Amendment.

The impact of even just one endorsement from a house of worship would be powerful and could have a significant impact on an election, but this provision permits far more than merely a lone statement of support. Section 5201, for example, would allow:

A pastor to preach a sermon endorsing one or more candidates. His church could then post a video of that sermon on its website, email it to parishioners, and distribute it publicly on social media.

A Rabbi to endorse a candidate during the welcoming message provided to those attending her synagogue's community service event.

A church that is motivated by faith to provide social services to the public to tell each and every person who attends its meetings to vote for a particular candidate.

If such activities were allowed, the Johnson Amendment would be rendered meaningless as applied to houses of worship. The very purpose of the Johnson Amendment—to prevent government subsidized partisan campaign activity—would be allowed in every church and house of worship across the country.

SECTION 5201 WOULD REQUIRE THE IRS TO LOOK INTO THE INTERNAL WORKINGS OF HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND MAKE POLITICAL JUDGMENTS

The Johnson Amendment includes a clear rule: tax-exempt organizations, including houses of worship, cannot endorse candidates. This bill includes a vague and undefined test that is subject to IRS discretion. Enforcing the law would entangle the IRS in internal church governance and require it to make judgments about religion.

Section 5201 calls on the IRS to determine whether an endorsement (1) occurred during the "ordinary course" of the organization's "regular and customary activities" in carrying out its "tax-exempt purpose;" (2) whether it amounted to a "de minimis incremental expense," and (3) whether it took place during "religious services or gatherings." To determine whether the cost of any endorsement was a "de minimis incremental expense," the IRS would, not only have to define de minimis, but also have to investigate the house of worship's books. And to determine whether the endorsement was part of the "regular and customary activities," the IRS would have to examine the institution's history of activities. The IRS would also have to judge whether an event is "religious" or not and whether the activity serves the organization's "exempt purpose." By inviting that type of scrutiny of church documents and activities, and judgments about religion, this bill actually threatens, rather than upholds, the autonomy and independence of houses of worship.

EXEMPTING ONLY HOUSES OF WORSHIP FROM THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT WOULD VIOLATE THE CONSTITUTION

Under the religious freedom protections provided by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the government cannot prefer or favor religion or non-religion. The Johnson Amendment applies to all 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations, yet Section 5201 exempts only houses of worship from the restrictions of the Johnson Amendment. This special treatment raises serious concerns under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and undermines religious freedom.

CONCLUSION

For all the above reasons, we urge you to oppose the language effectively repealing the Johnson Amendment for houses of worship.

Sincerely,

MAGGIE GARRETT,
Legislative Director,
Americans United
for Separation of
Church and State.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH), the ranking member of the Budget Committee, and one of the most knowledgeable Members of the House.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a horror show today, this is a horror show debate, and this is a horror show process, but it is a disaster for the American people.

The tax bill we are debating today will abandon millions of American families. It showers the wealthy and corporations with massive tax cuts, and it adds \$1.5 trillion to our deficits. The top 1 percent get this massive pay-out in the neighborhood of \$500 billion; hardworking families get pocket change.

But millions don't even get that. In fact, 36 million middle class families will pay more in taxes because of this bill. Our Republican colleagues will be taking money out of the pockets of these families to give more tax cuts to the rich.

But it doesn't stop there. It never does. This is part of a dangerous three-step process that we have seen, unfortunately, far too often:

The first step, Republicans enact massive tax cuts for the rich, claiming they will generate enough growth to pay for themselves. I know my Republican colleagues desperately want the American people to believe that this is what will happen. But the record is clear. It failed in the 1980s, and it failed in the 2000s. It was an epic failure in Kansas.

This is about politics, not reality, for them, which brings us to step two. Once these cuts fail to produce the growth that they promise, Republicans will shriek about the impending doom of high deficits and debt. Then they will quickly move to step three, demanding cuts in vital programs that benefit working families throughout our country.

We have seen this act before. As I said before, it is a horror show. There is a reason why a lot of people are looking at this and saying this is the great tax scam of 2017—because it is the great tax scam of 2017.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE), one of the key leaders of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American Dream is what separates us from the rest of the world. It promises that, with hard work and determination, you can improve your station in life and that your children

have an opportunity for a better life than yours. But for many in the generation coming of age in the last decade, the American Dream has been a little tarnished and just out of reach.

The last time we did tax reform was 30 years ago. At that time, we were the world's uncontested economic leader. Our economic system and Tax Code were competitive. But for decades, we have sat by as the world passed us by.

In 1990, the middle class was about 50 percent of American families; today, only 40 percent. Today, the middle class makes just about the same take-home pay as it did in 1990.

When we all worry about income disparity and the gulf between the rich and the poor in this country, this is the source of the problem. The American middle class is smaller and has not had a raise in 30 years.

How could this happen? It has everything to do with a bloated, overregulating, and overtaxing Federal Government, a government that sucks the life out of the economy and forces our companies, our innovators, and our job creators out of our country to survive.

Some folks say it doesn't matter that we have the highest business tax rate in the world. That is not why our companies left. They say those jobs aren't coming back.

Well, I say the outdated Tax Code is an anchor around the neck of our businesses, our innovators, and the American middle class. I say the American worker can compete with anyone on a level playing field if we just get government off their back.

Since January, we have been working to correct that. We have made dramatic steps in reducing regulation. You can already see the economic lift.

Today, we undertake a tax cut, which will restore economic growth, put more take-home pay into the pockets of hardworking Americans, and restore opportunity for a generation of Americans. It will bring American jobs back to America, which will grow our middle class and, finally, after 30 years, our middle class will get the pay raise it deserves.

If you really wish to grow our economy, you should vote for this bill.

If you really wish to give the middle class a pay raise, you should vote for this bill.

If you really wish to reduce income disparity, you should vote for this bill.

If you really wish to give hope to Americans who have given up and left the workforce and wish to reduce crime and addiction in this country, you should vote for this bill.

If you want America to have the economic strength to remain a force of peace and stability in the world, you should vote for this bill.

And, finally, if you truly believe what Thomas Jefferson said 240 years ago, that all men are created equal and that they are entitled to pursue their own happiness, you should vote for this bill.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN).

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, this bill put forward by congressional Republicans isn't a tax plan; it is a tax scam.

Republicans are going to borrow money on the backs of working families to give a tax cut to corporations in the top 1 percent. This will increase taxes on the middle class. This will add to our Nation's debt and pass the bill to our children.

This Republican tax scam hurts seniors and families with long-term medical needs by eliminating the medical expense deduction that 9 million Americans, and nearly 120,000 people in my home State of New Mexico, depend upon.

Destroying the medical expense deduction delivers a staggering blow to New Mexico families. Listen to this story sent to me by Lisa, a constituent of mine from northern New Mexico:

"My husband and I are lifelong native New Mexicans who grew up here, went to college here, and have opened and operate our two businesses in our home State. We are the proud parents of two wonderful children. New Mexico's our home, and we're proud to live here, contribute to our State's economy, and realize our version of the American Dream.

"Like most families today, life isn't always easy. The kids and I have medically complex conditions which require expensive medications, and my husband and I struggle with student loan debt, housing and transportation costs, and making a good life for our family. We incur \$5,000 to \$7,000 in out-of-pocket medical costs each year. Without the medical expense deductions, I am not sure we could continue to meet the demands of raising healthy, happy children while keeping our businesses going and growing.

"For us, this deduction is a lifeline, and the thought of losing that lifeline means we could drown in debt. That's not the American Dream—that's a nightmare."

This is real and this is personal to people all across the country. Let's vote this bill down today, come back, work in a bipartisan fashion, work with our ranking member, Mr. RICHARD NEAL, and come up with real tax reform that puts American working families first.

Mr. Speaker, let's do the right thing today and put hardworking families first with our decision today.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT), a key leader on the Tax Policy Subcommittee.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue. It is an honor for me to serve on the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This is a historic opportunity to reject the status quo and provide real tax relief to the families, individuals, and businesses in my district.

America's Tax Code is broken. It is uncompetitive for American compa-

nies, and it is unfair to American workers. The American people deserve a Tax Code that works for them, not one that works for special interests in Washington. They deserve a Tax Code that rewards their lifetime of hard work, not one that squeezes and depletes their savings.

□ 1045

They deserve a Tax Code that prioritizes their goals, not penalizes their success.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act creates a Tax Code that is focused on growth, fairness, and a booming economy for everyone.

The reforms in this bill level the playing field for small businesses in my district in north Texas around the DFW Airport, giving them an opportunity to grow and hire more people and spend more money in our economy, and allow the hardworking taxpayers whom I represent to keep more of their paycheck and increase their family's budget.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for allowing me to represent the views of my constituents throughout the process of the committee work. I urge my colleagues to take advantage of this very historic opportunity and vote in favor of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SÁNCHEZ), a very thoughtful member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1, or better known as the GOP tax scam.

This bill provides tax cuts for corporations and multimillionaires at the expense of hardworking middle class families. Massive corporate tax cuts do not guarantee job growth or higher wages. The only thing guaranteed is the \$2.3 trillion that this scam adds to the deficit.

Democrats are serious about passing comprehensive tax reform that is fair and that puts a little more money in the pockets of working Americans. This fiasco of a bill is not fair.

Corporations get a massive 15 percent tax cut, but what do working families get? They get nicked and dined.

Despite student loan debts surpassing \$1 trillion, this bill eliminates the student loan interest deduction, which only allows those earning \$80,000 or less to claim it in the first place, squarely hurting middle class Americans who are trying to pay off debt, save for a home, or buy a new car.

Teachers will no longer be able to deduct expenses for school supplies that they purchase with their own money for their classrooms, yet corporations are able to deduct the cost of those same supplies that they purchase.

Seniors and people with chronic illnesses would no longer be able to deduct some of the cost of their treatment. At a time when many families are feeling the pressures of affording care for their children and their aging

parents, this bill takes money right out of their pockets.

Under this bill, 29 million households would lose their property tax deduction. Eighty percent of middle class homeowners would lose, compared with just 13 percent of high-income earners. Does that sound fair?

Finally, the elimination of the State and local income tax deduction disproportionately impacts middle-income families, especially those in California, whose residents would see an overall net tax increase of \$12.1 billion.

The Tax Code is a reflection of our values. The Republicans have clearly chosen who they serve—the wealthy and corporations—but I am concerned about the 36 million Americans who will see a tax increase, teachers and their students, and people with pre-existing conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this disaster of a bill.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD two letters in opposition to this bill, one from SEIU and one from the AFL-CIO.

SEIU,

Washington, DC, November 6, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, House Committee on Ways & Means,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Ways & Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY, RANKING MEMBER NEAL, AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS: On behalf of the two million members of the Service Employees International Union ("SEIU"), I write to strongly oppose H.R. 1, the misleadingly named "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." H.R. 1 would double down on the same failed trickle down policies that have hurt working families for decades. Once again, major legislation is being drafted behind closed doors, out of the view of the American people and without any input from Democratic members of Congress.

It is unconscionable that elected representatives would mark-up and jam through a bill that significantly affects the financial security of their constituents without appropriate time for non-partisan analysis and for all Americans to properly understand the real impacts on their everyday lives. There is no need to rush legislation of this magnitude through Congress due to artificial political timelines. Instead, there should be an open process by which all stakeholders including working people and not just corporate lobbyists are able to provide input.

Although this bill pretends to benefit the middle class, the tax cuts proposed under this bill would go overwhelmingly to high-income households and large corporations. And this bill would actually raise taxes for some low- and moderate-income households, while making it harder for states to fund healthcare, education, infrastructure and other investments. History has shown us that these types of tax breaks never 'trickle down' to working people and will result in cuts to healthcare, education and other programs our communities depend on. If passed, this legislation would give millionaires and corporations a reason to celebrate but would hurt working Americans who are trying to put food on the table, start their first businesses, send their children to college, or save for their retirement and buy homes.

For these reasons, SEIU urges you to oppose H.R. 1 and instead, work in a bi-partisan

and transparent manner on policies that will improve the lives of working families. If you have any questions, please contact John Foti.

Sincerely,

JOHN GRAY,
Legislative Director.

AFL-CIO,

Washington, DC, November 14, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1). H.R. 1 is not a "jobs bill," it is a job killer that gives huge tax breaks to companies that outsource jobs. It is also the poster child for the failed "trickle-down" economic theory that has never worked and has repeatedly stuck working people with the tab for tax giveaways for millionaires, big corporations, and Wall Street.

The Republican leadership wants to pay for these giveaways with drastic cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, education, and other programs that working people depend on. The price tag of H.R. 1 is \$1.5 trillion over 10 years, while the budget resolution includes \$5 trillion in budget cuts, including \$1.5 trillion from Medicaid and Medicare.

H.R. 1 would waste trillions of dollars on tax breaks for people who do not need them. According to the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT), 45% of the tax benefits would ultimately go to households making over \$500,000 per year; 38% of the tax benefits would go to households making over \$1 million; and the top 1% one percent would get an average annual tax cut of \$64,720. By contrast, households making between \$20,000 and \$40,000 would actually pay more in taxes.

H.R. 1 would hurt working people in many ways. It would eliminate the deduction for state and local income and sales taxes, punishing states that make the kind of investments that create good jobs and starving communities of the funding they need for education, infrastructure, and other essential public services. H.R. 1 would repeal deductions for student loan interest, tuition expenses, and tuition assistance and end tax credits for students to cover college expenses, making it harder for students and their families to afford higher education at a time when tuition prices are at an all-time high. Under this bill, corporations could still deduct their payments to lawyers to fight unions, but union members could no longer deduct union dues and educators could no longer deduct their out-of-pocket expenses.

On the corporate side, H.R. 1 would give a giant tax cut to big corporations that outsource jobs. Under this bill, a business that creates jobs on Main Street USA would pay U.S. taxes on its profits at a rate of 20%, while a big corporation that outsources those same jobs to Ireland or Switzerland would pay no U.S. taxes on the profits it earns from outsourcing. Currently, the United States taxes all profits of U.S. corporations, whether earned in the United States or in a foreign country, at the same rate of 35% (though a corporation that earns profits in a foreign country does not have to pay U.S. taxes on those earnings until it repatriates them to the United States). H.R. 1 changes this system so a U.S. corporation never pays any U.S. income taxes on the profits it earns from active operations in a foreign country (as opposed to domestic profits that the company disguises as foreign profits through the use of accounting gimmicks). Reducing the U.S. tax rate on offshore profits from 35% to 0%—basically a subsidy to companies that outsource jobs—would cost \$208 billion over 10 years. Even worse, the bill would encourage foreign countries that want to attract offshore investment to lower their corporate tax rate. The

more foreign countries lower their corporate tax rates to attract offshore investment, the bigger the tax subsidy for offshoring this bill will provide. The GOP tax bill creates a powerful incentive for big companies to outsource jobs, and it is an incentive that will grow over time.

With regard to past profits, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) estimates that H.R. 1 would give multinational corporations a tax windfall of \$529 billion, allowing them to get away with paying just \$223 billion of the \$752 billion they owe on accumulated offshore earnings. There is no economic case for discounted tax rates on profits already earned. The last time we gave companies a break on the profits they booked offshore, they used that money for executive bonuses and dividends. They did not use the money for creating new jobs, raises for workers, or investments in new factories or equipment. The top 15 companies to take advantage of the so-called "tax holiday" in 2004 laid off 20,000 workers in the subsequent two years. There is no reason to believe this time will be different. JPMorgan says, "We expect little economic effect from firms repatriating funds to the U.S."

The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1), which gives huge tax breaks to companies that outsource jobs and makes working people pay the price for tax giveaways to millionaires, big corporations, and Wall Street.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,
Director, Government Affairs Department.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY), our chief deputy whip.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee for his hard work and effort, his staff's effort, and his committee members' effort to put this great bill on the floor today.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is a vitally important bill. This will help all Americans' lives for the better. The name fits for this bill as well. It truly is a tax cut for American working families, and it creates good-paying jobs.

The bill is the result of over 3 years of hard work here in the House of Representatives. It has been clear for years that our Tax Code is broken. We all agree on that. Simply put, it does not work for the vast majority of the American people.

What we do is simplify the Tax Code. More Americans will be able to take a standard deduction, file on a postcard their tax return, simplifying the process. Importantly, it makes us more competitive internationally so we don't lose jobs to overseas companies. That makes us stronger as a nation.

At the same time, it helps small businesses compete with those large businesses, with those global businesses, and makes sure that our Main Streets are strong in America.

This is a very good bill. It is a very good bill, well contemplated, and will have a great impact on working families.

The bill helps families in my district in particular. The Tax Foundation says that average middle class families in my district in western North Carolina are going to see a \$2,400 increase in

their take-home pay. That is real money for working Americans. It is real money for North Carolinians as well.

The bill also helps small businesses by reducing their tax rates and allowing them to create more good-paying jobs. We need that. Small businesses are the lifeblood of western North Carolina's communities. We need them strengthened.

The same Tax Foundation study estimates that this bill will create nearly a million new jobs nationwide, including more than 30,000 in North Carolina alone.

Now, there is a great debate in this body about the approach we took on this bill. There is a fundamental disagreement between the two parties here.

My colleagues on the left want more power, more expenditures from government, and want to take more from the American people in order to pay for that.

We believe, on the Republican side of the aisle, that American families should be able to keep more of what they earn, make more decisions for themselves, empower communities, empower small businesses, make us more competitive and make us stronger.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill, to send a strong message that we in the House of Representatives have a strong tax package for the American people. I look forward to getting this bill signed into law before Christmas.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), the chairman of the Democratic Caucus and a great leader on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I have to give it to Speaker RYAN and to President Trump and all of my Republican colleagues. I have to give them their due. They announced earlier this year they would cut taxes for corporate special interests, and today they are following through on that promise.

The problem is, in order to do it, they are raising taxes on middle class families. Don't take my word for it. Listen to them.

The Republicans started this process by saying that every American, everyone in America, will get a tax cut. Now they are saying, on average, people will get a tax cut, and even that is incorrect.

It is time to be honest with the American people. What we have before

us today isn't a bill, it is a scam—a scam that will hurt homeowners in Irvine, California, in Mrs. WALTERS' district; a scam that will hurt seniors in Lancaster, New York, in Congressman CHRIS COLLINS' district; a scam that will hurt students in Toms River, New Jersey, in TOM MACARTHUR's district; a scam that will hurt veterans in Barrington, Illinois, in PETE ROSKAM's district; and a scam that will absolutely hurt the middle class in every congressional district in our country, 36 million people to be exact.

In my district, a quarter of all homeowners will lose the ability to deduct their taxes, but corporate special interests, they can still deduct their taxes under the GOP plan.

Mr. Speaker, 20,000 students in Queens and the Bronx, in my district, will lose one of the most effective ways to pay down their student loan debt. That is right. Republicans are eliminating the ability to deduct the interest on student loan payments.

This scam eliminates the assistance for small businesses to hire veterans here at home, but it continues the tax breaks to ship American jobs overseas. Yes, you heard that correctly. Republicans and President Trump are doling out tax breaks for companies to move overseas but will take away benefits to hire American veterans right here at home.

These aren't the values of my constituents, but, apparently, they are the values of Speaker RYAN, President Trump, and the entire congressional Republican caucus.

So how did we end up here? It is because when the Republicans sat down to write this bill, they didn't have the average American in mind. They had their wealthy donors and corporate friends in mind. Republicans started tax reform with this question: How do we get the corporate rate down? Democrats would have started with the question: How do we raise up the middle class?

Republicans wrote a bill, a tax scam, that benefits people who own second and third homes, but they left behind average American homeowners. They left behind teachers, who use their own money to buy school supplies. They left average Americans behind, because they never had you in mind to begin with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from New York an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of hardworking Americans throughout this country, I say, vote "no" on H.R. 1, vote "no" on H.R. 1 percent.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY for his efforts to get this tax reform bill done.

Our outdated and uncompetitive Tax Code has led to slow economic growth

over the past decade in America. Today, we are taking an important step to fix that. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will reform the Tax Code and help foster economic growth.

For more than three decades, families have paid a growing cost for our country's increasingly complex and burdensome Tax Code that is chockfull of special interest loopholes. This is not fair.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will simplify the process of filing taxes by doubling the size of the standard deduction and removing the need for millions to itemize their deductions. It will provide tax cuts to millions of middle-income working families.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act also includes many tax reforms for businesses in order to spur economic growth. The bill makes it easier for entrepreneurs to start businesses, and it brings down the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 20 percent to be in line with our competitors around the world.

This will help spur economic growth by encouraging businesses to move their capital and jobs back to the United States and will help lower prices for Americans, who are the ones who ultimately pay for high corporate taxes through higher prices.

I'm proud that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is focused on growing the economy, bringing jobs back to Main Street, and increasing paychecks for workers. This bill is committed to helping families because the family unit is the cornerstone of our nation. We made a promise to families that we'd deliver them tax relief—and we're holding to it. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will fix our bureaucratic tax nightmare and puts families first again.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), the son of a preacher man, who always speaks truth to power.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Republicans can dress it up and call it good names, but that will not change the fact that H.R. 1 is a scam that will be perpetrated on America's middle-income families.

This bill will make it harder to own a home, raise a family, and afford a postsecondary education.

It should come as no surprise that President Trump wanted to call the bill: "Cut, Cut, Cut." That would have been apropos. The first cut is for him and his family, the second cut is for his wealthy friends, and the third cut is for large corporations and businesses that ship jobs overseas.

H.R. 1 certainly does not cut taxes for middle-income families or small businesses; in fact, it does just the opposite.

Under H.R. 1, millions of Americans, middle-income families, will pay more—500,000 of whom live in South Carolina. Middle-income families and first-time homeowners who utilize mortgage interest deductions will pay

more, because the GOP scam lowers the cap, making homeownership more expensive and driving down property taxes for current homeowners.

Middle-income families with children in college or recent graduates will pay more, because the GOP scam eliminates deductions for interest on student loans. This includes 12 million American families, 156,000 of whom are South Carolinians.

□ 1100

Middle-income families struggling to pay costly medical bills will pay more because the GOP scam shamefully eliminates that deductibility. This includes 9 million American families, and nearly 140,000 live in South Carolina.

Middle-income families with children in daycare, nursery school, or aging parents will pay more because the GOP scam eliminates the deductions for dependent care assistance.

Middle-income schoolteachers will pay more because the GOP scam eliminates their ability to deduct the cost of the supplies they purchase for their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1 is an attack on middle-income families. It will subject the good people of this country to a second Great Recession and raise taxes on 36 million middle-income households.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, this GOP tax scam will add \$1.5 trillion to the deficit over the next 10 years and trigger massive funding cuts across the government next year. Medicare will see a \$25 billion-per-year cut.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to engage the gentleman from Texas in a colloquy.

We should not be satisfied with the historically low economic growth rates of the past decade. This tax reform bill that creates jobs, increases paychecks, grows our economy, and increases American competitiveness can help Maryland families and businesses.

The bill we are considering today has many positive elements that will benefit our country in many ways. However, I am concerned about its impact on some of my constituents in Maryland who pay high State and local income taxes. I ask you, as the Ways and Means chairman, to continue to work with me to ensure that families and job creators in my district will all be helped by this legislation.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HARRIS. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding.

The intent of our tax reform bill is to achieve tax relief for individuals at every income level in every State.

I agree with the gentleman, there are still some areas where we will and can

make improvements. If the gentleman is willing to help us continue to move this process forward today, I am happy to commit to working with him to ensure we reach a positive outcome for his constituents to reconcile our differences with the Senate.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for agreeing to work with me on this as we move forward. I will be voting for this bill today, and I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill to increase American competitiveness.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the lead Democrat on the Foreign Affairs Committee who understands the impact of double taxation from a donor State.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, someone near and dear to me once said that the Republican Party is the party of rich men and women, and the Democratic Party is the party of working men and women. Nothing proves that more than this tax scam today.

I have been around here a long time. Of all the bills I have seen, this is one of the worst bills I have ever seen on the floor of this House. It is actually a disaster. It raises taxes on the middle class and on millions of families across America. It adds trillions to the debt to give tax cuts to America's wealthy families and corporations while stripping credits and deductions from middle class families.

What ever happened to the fiscal responsibility of the Republican Party?

This budget ransacks Medicare and Medicaid of \$1.5 trillion, and the GOP will use the new deficits to justify further devastating Medicare and Medicaid.

Finally, it is a terrible disaster for my New York constituents who already pay their fair share of taxes. New York is a donor State, meaning that we pay more to the Federal Government than what we get in return.

This will reduce or eliminate key deductions, such as curbing or eliminating deductibility of State and local taxes, mortgage interest deductions, college debt, student loans.

We are a high-tax State. This is a disaster. Scrap this disaster. Go back to the drawing board and write a bill which is fair to middle class taxpayers.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the voice of Houston.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is not the American Dream tax plan. This is the American nightmare, a tax scam of the worst proportion.

With over 8,000 of my constituents last evening on a teleconference town hall meeting, overwhelmingly they disagreed with a tax plan that cuts Medicare or Medicaid to finance tax cuts, eliminates the mortgage tax deduction, so that those who are suffering from Hurricane Harvey, trying to rebuild

their lives, seeking a new home cannot, in fact, deduct their mortgage.

The same thing with the 200,000 Texans who are going to pay more because we are eliminating the deduction for State and local taxes, and eliminating deductions for student loans, casualty losses; by next year, \$25 billion in Social Security cuts.

My seniors on the phone last night asked me about those cuts. They asked me about the medical expenses cuts for seniors. All of that is eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a sample of tele-townhall survey questions and answers.

TAX TELE-TOWNHALL SURVEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(1) Do you agree that a tax bill should cut tax at the expense of Medicaid and Medicare? 95 percent said no.

(2) The current tax reform bill will eliminate the tax deduction for student loan interest and the lifetime learning credit. Do you support the elimination of these tax credits? 91 percent said no.

(3) The current tax code allows homeowners to deduct interest on mortgages. Would you support a tax plan that includes a reduction in credit for first-time home buyers? 95 percent said no.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this plan will show no growth. The neutral tax policy entity said you will get no growth, no growth in wages, and you will send jobs overseas in waves.

It is a tax scam and it is an American nightmare. Vote against this tax scam.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Budget Committee, I rise in strong and unyielding opposition to H.R. 1, the so-called "Tax Cut and Jobs Act," which more accurately should be called the "Republican Tax Scam Act."

I oppose this cruel and immoral \$1.7 trillion tax giveaway to wealthy corporations and the top one percent because it raises taxes on poor, working, and middle class families; explodes the deficit by adding an additional \$2.2 trillion over ten years; and will require an estimated \$5.4 trillion cut in funding for the programs ordinary Americans depend on for health security, educational opportunity, and economic progress.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are not fooled; they know trickle-down economics has never worked, and they see right through this phony tax plan and recognize it for the scam that it is.

That is why Americans reject this Republican tax giveaway by an overwhelming 2:1 margin according to a poll released yesterday by Quinnipiac.

Specifically, 61 percent think the Republican tax scam will benefit the wealthy the most; only 16 percent say the plan will reduce their taxes.

59 percent think it is a very bad idea to eliminate the deduction for state and local income taxes.

Nearly half of respondents (40 percent) think it a bad idea to lower the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 20 percent.

This Republican tax plan is even more toxic to my constituents in the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, as you may know, my constituents and others in Texas are still struggling to recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey, the worst storm ever to make landfall in the continental United States.

Yet last evening, nearly 8,000 of them took time out of their busy schedules to join me in a tele-townhall to discuss the tax scheme that has been rushed to the floor for a vote by the Republican leadership in the hope of passing it before the American people learn its insidious details.

But I have got news for them: too late.

My constituents understand and let me know that they believe it is important that the United States has a tax system that is fair, balanced, smart, and provides the resources and opportunities to allow all Americans to reach their potential.

And by margins exceeding 90 percent, they reject:

1. Any cuts to Medicare or Medicaid to finance tax cuts for wealthy corporations and the top 1 percent;

2. Eliminating the mortgage interest deduction;

3. Eliminating the deductibility of state and local taxes;

4. Eliminating existing deductions for student loan interest or making taxable college endowment funds or college fellowships expenses.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents, and Americans across the country, oppose this unfair Republican tax giveaway because nearly half of the \$1.7 trillion tax cut goes to just the top one percent.

In fact, the average annual tax cut for the top one-tenth of one percent is \$320,000; for the top one percent it is \$62,000, and for those earning \$1 million a year it is \$68,000.

Nearly 25 percent of the tax cut goes to households in just the top one-tenth of one percent, who make at least \$5 million a year (2027).

While super-wealthy corporations and individuals are reaping windfalls, millions of middle-class and working families will see their taxes go up:

1. 13 million households face a tax increase next year.

2. 45 million households face a tax increase in 2027.

3. 29 million households (21 percent) earning less than \$100,000 a year see a tax increase.

On average, families earning up to \$86,000 annually would see a \$794 increase in their tax liability, a significant burden on families struggling to afford child care and balance their checkbook.

It is shocking, but not surprising, that under this Republican tax scam, the total value of tax cuts for just the top one percent is more than the entire tax cut for the lower 95 percent of earners.

Put another way, those earning more than \$912,000 a year will get more in tax cuts than 180 million households combined.

The core of this Republican tax scheme is a massive tax cut from 35 percent to 20 percent for corporations, but that is not the only way that the wealthy are rewarded.

The massive tax cuts for corporations are permanent but temporary for working and middle-class families.

Another immoral aspect of this terrible tax scam is that it abandons families that face natural disasters or high medical costs by repealing deductions for casualty losses and medical expenses.

Mr. Speaker, in what universe does it make any sense to eliminate, as this bill would, a deduction for:

1. Teachers who purchase supplies for their classroom;

2. Moving expenses to take a new job and taxes employer-provided moving expenses; or

3. Dependent care assistance, making it harder for families to afford day care, nursery school, or care for aging parents?

This Republican tax scam jeopardizes American innovation and competitiveness by eliminating the deduction for student loan interest, which affects 12 million borrowers, and cuts total education assistance by more than \$64 billion.

Under the extraordinary leadership of President Obama and the determined efforts of ordinary Americans, we pulled our way out from under the worst of the foreclosure crisis when the housing bubble burst in 2007.

Inexplicably, Republicans are now championing a tax scheme that will make the homes of average Americans less valuable because deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes are much less valuable than under current law.

A tax plan that reduces home values, as this one does, puts pressure on states and towns to collect revenues they depend on to fund schools, roads, and vital public resources.

Mr. Speaker, an estimated 2.8 million Texas households deduct state and local taxes with an average deduction of \$7,823 in 2015.

But this is not the end of the bad news that will be delivered were this tax scam to become law, not by a long shot.

The proposed elimination of the personal exemption will harm millions of Texans by taking away the \$4,050 deduction for each taxpayer and claimed dependent; in 2015, roughly 9.3 million dependent exemptions were claimed in the Lone Star State.

Equally terrible is that this Republican tax scam drastically reduces the Earned Income Tax Credit, which encourages work for 2.7 million low-income individuals in Texas, helping them make ends meet with an average credit of \$2,689.

The EITC and the Child Tax Credit lift about 1.2 million Texans, including 663,000 children, out of poverty each year.

So to achieve their goal of giving more and more to the haves and the “have mores,” our Republican friends are willing to betray seniors, children, the most vulnerable and needy, and working and middle-class families.

The \$5.4 trillion cuts in program investments that will be required to pay for this tax giveaway to wealthy corporations and individuals will fall most heavily on low-income families, students struggling to afford college, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

America will not be made great by financing a \$1.7 trillion tax cut for the rich by stealing \$1.8 trillion from Medicare and Medicaid, abandoning seniors and families in need, depriving students of realizing a dream to attend college without drowning in debt, or disinvesting in the working families.

America will not be positioned to compete and win in the global, interconnected, and digital economy by slashing funding for scientific research, the arts and humanities, job retraining, and clean energy just to pay for a tax cut to corporations and individuals who do not even need it.

Mr. Speaker, the tax scheme presented here by Republicans is not a plan but a scam that represents a betrayal of our values as a nation.

This tax scam is not a revenue policy adapted for the real world that real Americans live in but a fantasy resting on the monstrous belief that the wealthy have too little money and that poor, working, and middle-class families have too much.

Our Republican friends continue to cling to the fantasy belief that their tax cuts for the rich will pay for themselves despite all precedent to the contrary and evidence that their tax scheme is projected by experts to lose between \$3 trillion and \$7 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, in evaluating the merits of a taxing system, it is not enough to subject it only to the test of fiscal responsibility.

To keep faith with the nation's past, to be fair to the nation's present, and to safeguard the nation's future, the plan must also pass a “moral test.”

The Republican tax bill fails both of these standards.

I strongly oppose H.R. 1, the “Republican Tax Scam Act,” and urge all Members to join me in voting against this reckless, cruel, and heartless proposal that will do nothing to improve the lives or well-being of middle and working class families, and the poor and vulnerable ‘caught in the tentacles of circumstance.’

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

So I note that constituents in the 18th District of Texas, the past speaker's district, that average families will see a tax cut of nearly \$1,000, and Texas will grow 81,000 new jobs and see higher paychecks as a result of this tax reform bill.

We are proposing a Tax Code so fair and simple, 9 out of 10 Americans will be able to file using a simple postcard system. There is a fairness and equality for each American—knowing what each others' deductions are because we have exactly the same ones.

This simplicity, this fairness, these larger paychecks, this is what the Tax Cut and Jobs Act is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS), the leader of the Republican Conference.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his tremendous leadership on this important legislation this morning.

I am proud to rise in support of enacting tax reform, tax relief to millions of Americans. We have been waiting a long time, more than 30 years. And while everything else has changed over 30 years, our Tax Code, unfortunately, has only gotten old, outdated, bigger, and more complicated. It has become a burden, a burden that we are going to lift.

Now, there are some defenders of the status quo who think that the Tax Code is just fine. Well, that is not what the American people sent us here to do, to defend the status quo. We are here to do the big things.

Our plan rewrites the Tax Code to put American families first, including families who have children with disabilities. For these families, who may have saved for their son's or daughter's college tuition, which is no longer needed, our plan carries on the legacy of the ABLE Act by allowing them to roll over from a 529 account to a 529A account, an ABLE account, to pay for things like medical bills or workforce development instead.

With this bill, we are making it easier for everyone to reach their full potential. We are lifting the tax burden for everyday, hardworking Americans. An extra \$1,182 for middle-income families in places like eastern Washington could make all the difference between living paycheck to paycheck and saving for retirement or making that car payment.

Mr. Speaker, this is a historic moment, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me on the right side of history by voting in favor of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts. Let's help our hardworking men and women all across this country.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD The Washington Post op-ed, “The Republican tax plan's five worst dangers,” by Secretary Rubin, dated November 15, 2017.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 15, 2017]

THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN'S FIVE WORST DANGERS

(By Robert Rubin)

The deficit-funded tax cuts advancing through Congress are a fiscal tragedy for which our country will pay a huge price over time. While the details of the tax plan remain in flux, its fundamental contours will not change. Nor will its \$1.5 trillion of deficit funding, the amount stipulated in the recently passed budget resolution.

Perhaps it's hopeless to expect those in Congress who have long bemoaned deficits and the debt to oppose the plan. If, however, as a matter of conscience or renewed reflection they decide to take heed, here are the fiscal dangers posed by the plan.

To start, the tax cuts will not increase growth and, given their fiscal effects, would likely have a significant and increasingly negative impact. The nonpartisan Tax Policy Center's latest report estimated that, over 10 years, the average increase in our growth rate would be roughly zero, counting the crowding out of private investment by increasing deficits but not counting other adverse effects of worsening our fiscal outlook. The Penn Wharton Budget Model, using the same approach, estimates virtually no increase in long-term growth. Goldman Sachs projects an increase of 0.1 percent to 0.2 percent in the first couple of years and an average increase over 10 years of just 0.05 percent per year, not counting any of the adverse fiscal effects.

These estimates reflect three underlying views held by mainstream economists. First, individual tax cuts will not materially induce people to work more. Second, corporate tax cuts will likely have limited effect on investment or decisions about where to locate

business activity, given the many other variables at play. Third, deficit-funded tax cuts will have little short-term effect on growth, except perhaps for some temporary overheating, because we are at roughly full employment.

With no additional revenue from increased growth to offset the tax cuts' cost, the publicly held debt of the federal government would increase by \$1.5 trillion. An additional danger is that the actual deficit impact would be increased by abandoning the Congressional Budget Office's nonpartisan evaluation that has been used for decades by both parties in favor of partisan calculations by those pushing the tax cuts.

Adding \$1.5 trillion or more to the federal debt would make an already bad situation worse. A useful measure of our fiscal position is the ratio of publicly held government debt to economic output or gross domestic product, called the debt/GDP ratio. In 2000, the debt/GDP ratio was 32 percent. The ratio is now 77 percent. Looking forward, the CBO projects the debt/GDP ratio to be 91 percent in 2027 and 150 percent in 2047. After \$1.5 trillion of deficit-funded tax cuts, those future ratios have been estimated to increase to roughly 97 percent in 2027 and 160 percent in 2047. These estimates likely substantially understate the worsening of our fiscal trajectory. That's because they do not account for the increasingly adverse effect on growth of the difficult-to-quantify effects of fiscal deterioration.

Exacerbating our already unsustainable fiscal trajectory with these tax cuts would threaten growth in five respects. These are highly likely to be substantial and to increase over time.

First, business confidence would likely be negatively affected by creating uncertainty about future policy and heightening concern about our political system's ability to meet our economic policy challenges.

Second, our country's resilience to deal with inevitable future economic and geopolitical emergencies, including the effects of climate change, would continue to decline.

Third, funds available for public investment, national security and defense spending—a professed concern of many tax-cut proponents—would continue to decline as debt rises, because of rising interest costs and the increased risk of borrowing to fund government activities.

Fourth, Treasury bond interest rates would be highly likely to increase over time because of increased demand for the supply of savings and increased concern about future imbalances. That, in turn, would raise private-sector interest rates, which could also increase due to widening spreads vs. Treasuries, further reflecting increased concern about future conditions. And even a limited increase in the debt/GDP ratio could focus attention on our fiscal trajectory's long-ignored risks and trigger outside increases in Treasury and private-sector interest rates. The ability to borrow in our own currency, and to print it through the Federal Reserve, may diminish these risks for a while, as might capital inflows from abroad. But these mitigating factors have their limits; at some point, unsound fiscal conditions almost surely would undermine our currency and debt markets.

Finally, at some unpredictable point, fiscal conditions—and these market dynamics—would likely be seen as sufficiently serious to cause severe market and economic destabilization.

We have an imperative need to address our unsustainable longer-term fiscal trajectory with sound economic policies. Few elected officials want to face this fact, but, at the very least, they should not make matters

worse. We can only hope that responsible elected officials will prevent this irresponsible tax plan from being adopted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 1 is postponed.

When debate resumes, the time remaining will be 17 minutes for the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and 12½ minutes for the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1545. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose certain patient information to State controlled substance monitoring programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3949. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the designation of State approving agencies for multi-State apprenticeship programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 4374. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize additional emergency uses for medical products to reduce deaths and severity of injuries caused by agents of war, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 807. An act to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 10 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1230

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 12 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed earlier today, 29½ minutes of debate remained on the bill.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) has 17 minutes remaining and,

without objection, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) has 12½ minutes remaining.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, Congress established Alaska Native Settlement Trusts in 1988 to provide permanent health, education, and welfare benefits to Alaska Natives, who are among the most economically disadvantaged populations in the United States.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Tax Code has, in many cases, impeded the creation and funding of Alaska Native Settlement Trusts. As a result, Alaska Native Settlement Trusts have not been able to function in the manner Congress originally intended to provide benefits for Alaska Natives. To remedy some of these tax issues, I have sponsored H.R. 3524, which permits an Alaska Native corporation to deduct contributions to their settlement trust.

The provisions of H.R. 3524 were not included in H.R. 1, and the tax bill also adversely increases Alaska Native Settlement Trust tax rates from 10 percent to 12 percent. This would make it more difficult for Alaska Native Settlement Trusts to provide long-term benefits to Alaska Natives.

Mr. Speaker, I request that the provisions of H.R. 3524 be included in the final conference report that results from the conference committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to work with the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) on this important issue for the Alaska Native community. Under the tax bill, Alaska Native Settlement Trusts would be unintentionally subject to a higher tax rate.

I thank him for bringing this to my attention. I assure him that I will focus on this in conference as we finalize individual rate structures between the House and the Senate. I also look forward to working with him to advance the provisions of his bill in this important area.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for those remarks. He has been great to work with. His staff has been outstanding. I thank him for his commitment to working on the inclusion of H.R. 3524 and maintaining existing rates in law with regard to Alaska Native Settlement Trusts, and, more generally, for his support of the Alaska Native community.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as we wind down this debate on tax reform or, what we should really call it, tax cut, I think that we should tabulate this as a missed opportunity. This could have

been done between the two parties. Instead, much of this was constructed without any Democratic input.

Reminder: In 1986, the historic Tax Reform Act included President Reagan and Speaker O'Neill, Chairman Rostenkowski, Dick Gephardt, and Bill Bradley. In this instance here, 32 years later, not one hearing was held on this tax bill that is about to be voted on in the next 45 minutes.

The significance of that is that there was never any back-and-forth, and in 1986, expert testimony was sought from 450 witnesses. We had not one witness who commented on the legislation.

It has been advertised as a middle class tax cut. Wait until you get the bill. How can you say that this is a middle class tax cut and compare that to repeal of the estate tax?

How many middle class people in America pay the estate tax?

That is how many people pay the estate tax. No middle class American pays the estate tax. There is no such thing as a death tax, in addition to which a middle class tax cut is described as doing away with the alternative minimum tax. 4.5 million families pay an alternative minimum tax in America. That is it.

I fixed the problem years ago for the middle class, and 27 million people stopped paying AMT. So now we are down to people at the very top.

So how are we paying for this? Or how are they paying for it, better, because they are not going to get much help on this side?

Well, they decided that that teacher who used to have \$250, that they could deduct on their income taxes, that is going to be abolished.

So if you have Alzheimer's and you exceed the 10 percent number in terms of cost in your healthcare for caring for that loved one at home who is sick or has dementia, that is how they are going to pay for the tax cut. They are going to take that away.

State and local property taxes, they are going to take that away—the deduction. They are going to pare back the mortgage interest tax deduction. All of this advertised on the basis of a middle class tax cut?

People at the bottom end are not going to get much from this tax cut. I want to take you back again, as I have repeatedly, because I have cast three great votes in this House during my 29 years: against the Iraq war, and there weren't many of us; against the cuts in 2001; and against the tax system in 2003; all advertised as progrowth economics.

There was no economic growth in the tax cuts of 2001, which totaled, by the way, \$1.3 trillion. For people who said at the time, "everybody gets a tax cut," they were correct. Then you looked at the distribution tables to see what people got at the top and then what people got at the bottom. Then we came back in 2003 and cut another trillion dollars in taxes—advertises progrowth economics—zippro growth occurred.

Then, by the way, the granddaddy of them all: How about repatriation. Repatriation, bringing back those earnings to the United States for investment in job growth, at, by the way, 5¼ was the tax burden they carried, all based on job growth. It was for stock buybacks, dividends, and layoffs.

We had a chance here to do something historic. We had a chance here in this debate and discussion because there is a genuine affability on that committee. We had this opportunity to take the Tax Code and transform it for the gig economy in the modern age. We didn't do that, though. Four days we had to examine this tax proposal with no hearings. Not one chance for a Democratic amendment to proceed.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this historic legislation before us today represents a crucial step to fulfilling our tax reform promise to the American people, but it is not the final step. We are Republicans. We believe the Tax Code doesn't belong to Washington. It belongs to the American people. We will continue to work to make it better and improve at every step of the way.

Before I make final remarks, I want to thank all of our Ways and Means Committee members who have done so much and worked so hard, as well as every Member of this House who helped make this opportunity real for the American people.

I also want to say how grateful I am to everyone at the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation and the House Office of the Legislative Counsel. Their careful analysis contributed so much to this bill.

Finally, I want to give special recognition to Barbara Angus, the chief tax counsel on the Ways and Means Committee, and all of our staff on the committee, who put their hearts and their souls and many sleepless nights in the development of this bill. I can't thank them enough for their hard work and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives is, by its very design, the Chamber of Congress closest to the American people. Today, this House—the people's House—will pass historic legislation to improve the lives of Americans nationwide.

For too long, this broken Tax Code has put the needs of the people second, propping up Washington's special interests at the expense of hardworking Americans.

For too long, this broken Tax Code has rewarded companies for outsourcing American jobs instead of encouraging them to create jobs here at home.

For too long, this broken Tax Code has eroded America's economic leadership around the world.

This country used to be the standard-bearer worldwide for competitive tax systems. Not anymore. Now the United

States is barely a spec in the rearview mirrors of so many of our international competitors.

In our businesses, our workers, our Made in America products, which are the best in the world, are bearing the consequences of Washington's failure to act. That stops now, and it stops with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

With this historic bill, we will provide real simplicity for every taxpayer, we will deliver real fairness to every hardworking American, we will be more competitive than ever, we will win worldwide and here at home, and we will see better jobs and bigger paychecks in every community of this great Nation so people can keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

With this bill, we will deliver a new Tax Code built for a new era of American prosperity.

So to Washington's special interests, who are now being propped up by absurd carve-outs and loopholes, get ready to stand on your own. To our international competitors, who are now leading the pack, get ready to have some company. To the American people, who have waited years for tax reform, get ready for the tax relief you deserve.

Today, this House—the people's House—is taking action on the most transformational tax overhaul in a generation, and we are taking action today. It is time for this old, broken Tax Code to go. It is time to put the American people first.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, let me acknowledge the support of the Democratic staff that are here as well: Kara Getz, Karen McAfee, Aruna Kalyanam, Peg McGlinch, Deva Kyle, Ji Prichard, and Suzanne Walsh. They did a magnificent job as well, and we are much dependent on the good staff work, particularly, on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier of the missed opportunity that we have here. We have a real problem in America with labor participation rates. Six million jobs go unanswered every day now in America, 18,000 precision manufacturing jobs in New England, and 1 million tech jobs, because skill sets don't align with the job opportunities that are out there.

Two million Americans sit home with opioid addictions who should be in the workforce. This was a chance to invest in human capital as well, to invest in our community colleges, to invest in apprenticeship programs. Yes, the other challenge that we have in America is, clearly, to invest in vocational education for many of the jobs that are available.

Instead, we pushed that off to the side and decided that, once again, if we just had tax cuts, all of these challenges and problems would go away.

The idea of investing in the human side of American opportunity is then

people do what we would like them to do in terms of home buying, raising families, caring for neighborhoods, and practicing the art form of citizenship.

Once again, what we are witnessing today—and we need to be alarmed about it—is the greater and greater conservation of wealth in America. Now, I understand it is complicated. It has to do much with technology and globalization, but it is also about the gig economy, and we, today, reward capital more than we reward labor.

When we get done, if they are successful on the other side, we are going to further concentrate wealth amongst those few families in America. We serve here in the House of Representatives, not in the House of Lords. This is not about peerage, where you are entitled to a seat in this House of Representatives. That is what is wrong. That is what Jefferson and Madison envisioned when they signed those bonds of the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution to break with Europe. We don't practice divine right here.

I wish the outcome here today, Mr. Speaker, would have been more genuine and it would have been different.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), our majority whip and a tremendous leader on tax reform.

□ 1245

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague from Texas. Chairman BRADY has done an incredible job at bringing this Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to the House floor.

Today is an historic day, Mr. Speaker. For families who for so long have been calling out saying that they want to pay less in taxes, we answer that call today, Mr. Speaker.

When you have heard the complaints, as I and so many others have every time we see a company move more jobs overseas, good, high-paying jobs overseas because America has the highest tax rate in the industrialized world, we finally do something about that today, Mr. Speaker, by cutting the corporate rate so that we can be competitive again and so that we can bring those jobs back home.

Let's talk about something else that is going to be a benefit to hardworking families in this bill, Mr. Speaker. We finally simplify the Tax Code in a way that over 90 percent of American families will actually be able to do their taxes on a postcard. Just think of how much that is going to save for people who have to pay to have their taxes done because the Code is so complicated and has become so massive that nobody can figure it out. We simplify the Code.

Let's go through those things.

We lower tax rates. Everybody is going to see lower tax rates at every income level.

We double the standard deduction from \$12,000 to \$24,000 that every family

can take advantage of now. That doubled standard deduction is going to be a big win for hardworking families that are struggling.

We eliminate special interest loopholes, Mr. Speaker. You might hear a lot of complaints out there from people who have been able to get their little piece of the Tax Code. The problem is, every time somebody gets a special interest loophole, it costs the rest of us. Now we get rid of those loopholes so that everybody can pay less in taxes. That is a big win for hardworking families.

Mr. Speaker, in our bill, we completely repeal the death tax, probably one of the most immoral parts of our Code, where small businesses, family farms, if their loved one dies, the first thing they are thinking is grieving for their loved one, but immediately after, they get a big tax bill from the Federal Government that, in many cases, forces them to sell their small business instead of passing it on to their family. That is part of the American Dream. They pay taxes on it. We repeal the death tax.

We deliver a much fairer Code, Mr. Speaker. Again, what this bill is about is finally putting more money in the pockets of hardworking families. It is about getting our economy moving again and creating jobs.

Families recognize when they see the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world, tens of thousands of jobs going to countries like Ireland and Canada. I love Ireland and I love Canada. I just don't want them to have tens of thousands of our good jobs. Let's bring those jobs back. In our bill, we do that, Mr. Speaker.

This bill is a win for hardworking families. This puts money back in the pockets of people who have been struggling so long, and it allows the economic growth that is going to see wages finally increase. After 10 years of a stagnant economy, it is about time we finally answer the call that millions of Americans have been asking us to do for so long, Mr. Speaker.

Let's pass the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and get our economy moving again.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), a very capable legislator, the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This is the most irresponsible bill that I will have been confronted with in the 37 years that I have been in the Congress of the United States.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is both reckless and feckless. It is reckless because it would add more than \$1.7 trillion—the chairman says over \$2 trillion—to the debt over a decade in a shameful act of hypocrisy for its supporters who, for years, have called for fiscal responsibility. It is feckless because its authors write it with an eye toward politics, not policy.

There is no courage in voting for this bill. It is easy to vote for a tax cut.

What is hard to do is paying for what we buy. Neither side does that particularly well.

There is no courage in voting for this bill, only a suspension of common sense and their now abandoned commitment to fiscal sustainability.

Furthermore, my Republican friends call this bill a tax cut. The gentleman who just spoke, the whip, said it is a reduction in rates, but 36 million working Americans will receive a tax increase under this bill. It was a very careful articulation of reduction of rates, but taxes for 36 million Americans, working Americans, will go up.

Furthermore, they call this bill a tax cut. It is not a stretch of the imagination to presume that, given Republicans' urgency to reject bipartisan compromise and deflect public input, the Members of this House will be asked to accept whatever version of the tax bill can pass the United States Senate.

Yesterday, the Senate Finance Committee rejected this bill 36-0. The Senate Finance Committee, headed by Republicans, rejected this bill 36-0.

I am reminded of what Representative MATT GAETZ, a Republican, said last month about the budget resolution that teed up this tax plan. He said that we were being "asked to vote for a budget that nobody believes in so that we have the chance to vote for a tax bill that nobody's read."

Mr. Speaker, I won't ask anyone to raise their hand if they have read this bill.

One hand.

Those who take this vote will have to live with it and just hope that whatever mystery tax package their Senate colleagues send over here won't gut whatever concessions they have extracted.

I heard the whip say no special provisions in this bill. I don't have the time to go through every special provision that has been used to get people to vote for this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't the tax reform the American people were promised or the tax reform the American people want.

Mr. Speaker, let's sit down together. Let's sit down together, the chairman and Mr. NEAL, two responsible, good Americans, sit down together not in a partisan way, but in a bipartisan way. That is the way we did the 1986 bill. That is why it was such a responsible piece of legislation.

Let's enact tax reform that focuses on the working class, the middle class, the people who need the money, not give over half of it to the richest people in America. I don't have any beef with them, we would all like to be rich, but they don't need a tax cut, and the middle class does. Why give 50 percent of the revenue to them?

Let's enact tax reform that focuses on the middle class. Let's enact tax reform that doesn't give half the benefit to those making more than \$900,000 a year.

Let's enact tax reform that improves our long-term fiscal position rather than adding the \$1.7 trillion to our debt that the CBO projects that this bill would add.

As former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin pointed out in an op-ed in today's Washington Post—and, by the way, he was the Secretary of the Treasury during the only 4 years of balanced budgets that we have experienced in the last 50 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOYER. Vote "no" on this bill. Look to your souls, not your polls or your political accounts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOYER. Reject this sellout of America's future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman is no longer recognized.

Mr. HOYER. ***.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), our majority leader and a champion for tax reform.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I want to thank the gentleman. I want to thank him for all those Americans out there who have waited decades for this, for the hours that he has listened, for the numerous hearings he has gone through to get us to this day.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before this body, but I want to speak to the people watching us at home right now and who will hear us in the hours and days to come. I want to speak to the people who stretch their budgets to get to the next paycheck. I want to speak to the people who are starting to wonder if the American promise no longer applies to them.

You need a comeback. America needs a comeback.

If we are successful today and in the weeks to come, you will keep more of the money that you earned. You will have more in your paycheck. Your life will improve. If we succeed, you will succeed, but if the leaders and obstructionists on the other side of the aisle win, you will lose. You see, they want Washington insiders and bureaucrats to keep more of your hard-earned income. They think it is theirs to spend. We think it is yours.

Now, I have tried my best to understand their opposition, and I have listened to the pessimistic leaders of a party that once upon a time claimed they stood for the common man.

Without a shred of evidence, they are certain our plan won't work. They drum up a stale argument from 30 years ago, saying all this bill does is help the rich. They call it a middle class tax hike.

That same paper our colleague just held also has fact checkers, but the fact checkers gave them not one, not

two, not even three, but the most Pinocchios you can give, four, for that lie.

Every honest person sees this as a tax cut for hardworking Americans. This bill increases the child tax credit, increases the standard deduction, increases wages, and is already bringing back jobs to America.

The fact is the first \$55,000 an average family of four earns will not face a single penny of income tax, not a single penny.

So what are these party leaders defending by their opposition?

It is not the people. After all, there is not a single person I have ever met in this Nation who wants higher rates, lower wages, fewer jobs, and a more complicated Tax Code. No, they aren't defending the people.

They are defending loopholes for the special interests, corporate welfare, and carve-outs for lobbyists. They are defending the abusive tactics of the status quo at the IRS.

You know what I find most absurd? They are defending the reckless tax-and-spend policies of broken States across this country. They have made it their mission to increase taxes on our fellow citizens. My friends on the other side of the aisle have the audacity to call this a tax increase. In the end, they are defending a broken status quo.

You know what I think, Mr. Speaker? I think that voting "no" on a plan with lower taxes, higher wages, more jobs, and a simpler system, that isn't about Republicans and Democrats. Voting "no" is telling the American people you do not have faith in them to rise if they are given a fair shot.

Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for this House and for everyone who is watching at home: Do you want higher taxes and less money in your pockets or do you want lower taxes and more money?

I think we have sent a message to the doubters and the critics. The American people do not want hard work to be punished. We do not accept decline. We do not accept that Washington knows how to spend our money better than we do.

I have a different message for the American people: To those trying to find a job, that long search is coming to an end. This is your comeback.

To those sick of just getting by and fighting for a raise, this is your comeback.

To those struggling to keep your small business afloat, to pay your employees, to help your neighborhood, this is your comeback.

□ 1300

To every American who ever dreamed of being an entrepreneur and owning a small business, this is your comeback.

To every mother and father starting a family, raising your kids, and trying to give them more of an opportunity than you ever had, this is your comeback.

Now, I put hope in the American people. This bill puts hope in our Amer-

ican people because we trust the people. That is the start of America's comeback.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds all Members to address their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the very capable Democratic leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and thank him for his superb leadership as the top Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee. I commend him, and all of our fellow Democrats on the committee, for standing up for the middle class in our country and fighting for the truth and what is in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this vote today is a defining moment for our country. Our votes today will decide the future of the American middle class and those who aspire to it, the future of our children and our grandchildren, and the future of the United States of America as the land of opportunity.

Today, Republicans have brought forth a bill that is pillaging the middle class to pad the pockets of the wealthiest and hand tax breaks to corporations shipping jobs out of America and drastically increasing the national debt.

The bill Republicans have brought to the floor today is not tax reform. It is not even a tax cut. It is a tax scam. So many people have written in about it who are affected by it, and I will submit all of that for the RECORD, but I do want to say that this is not only a defining moment, it is a moment of truth.

With straight faces and with the speed of light—I have to give them credit; they raced this thing through in the dark of night—they are trying to sell a bill of goods to the middle class that this is in their interest, that this is a middle-income tax cut.

According to the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, Republicans are raising taxes on 36 million middle class families.

I associate myself with the very wonderful comments of our distinguished House Democratic whip, Mr. HOYER, especially at the end when he said: "Look to your souls, not to your polls."

I want to speak to Pope Benedict, his encyclical, God is love. It was his first encyclical as pope, and in that encyclical, Pope Benedict quoted the wisdom of St. Augustine.

Seventeen centuries ago, St. Augustine said: "A state which is not governed according to justice would be just a bunch of thieves."

Benedict went on to say: "The state must inevitably face the question of how justice can be achieved here and now." And he cautioned against the "danger of certain ethical blindness caused by the dazzling effect of power and special interests."

Interesting, in light of the fact that when this bill is brought forward, the

Director of the National Economic Council, Gary Cohn, said: "The most excited group out there are the big CEOs, about our tax plan."

Is that about justice?

Congressman CHRIS COLLINS said: "My donors are basically saying, get it done or don't ever call me again."

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM said: "The financial contributions will stop" if this tax scam fails.

Well, he didn't say scam. I am saying scam. That is my word.

Back to the Pope and the Catholic bishops. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote: "... this proposal appears to be the first Federal income tax modification in American history that will raise income taxes on the working poor while simultaneously providing a large tax cut to the wealthy."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops went on to say: "This is simply unconscionable."

We always begin our session with prayer, and many of us attend mass on the weekend, on Sundays. But we cannot pray and think that that gives us a lesson to prey on people the rest of the week; and that is what this bill does. It preys on the middle class and those aspiring to it. It pillages and loots the middle class. It is a shameful piece of legislation, and the Republicans should know better.

They say it is going to get better in the Senate. Oh my gosh. In the Senate, as Mr. HOYER pointed out, unanimously, the Senate Finance Committee rejected this proposal already. Was it 26-0? Whatever the number was, the zero loomed large.

But getting back to values, because that is what we are here to do, and what we do in our budget, which the tax bill is a part of. It is supposed to be a statement of values.

In his study of civilization, the great British historian, Arnold Toynbee, found that, at the beginning of a hopeful country, the political leadership formed a creative minority that inspired and led the flowering of civilization. But in some nations, leaders became a dominant minority of "exploiters, focused on their own wealth and power."

Arnold Toynbee, welcome to the Republican side of the aisle and Congress.

These competing mindsets, he went on, between the dominant minority of exploiters versus the creative minority that inspired and led the flowering of civilization, these competing mindsets and motivations create schisms in the body social and schisms in the soul of the body politic.

And lo and behold, the Republican Party has written a bill, nearly half of the benefits go to the top 1 percent—top 1 percent in our country—and 80 percent of the benefits go to the top 2 percent. This is a defining moment, but it is also a moment of truth.

How can the Republicans, with a straight face, say to the middle class: Well, we are doubling this or doubling

that? Give with one hand, take with another.

And to hear them cheer, hear them cheer for the provision in here about the estate tax?

Listen to this. You tell me if you think this is fair.

1,800 families in America—not your family farmer. Everybody is taken care of in what we have done already with the estate tax.

In this bill, 1,800 of the wealthiest families, the filers in our country, will, in the life of the bill, get the break of \$172 billion; 1,800 families. This is for 1,800 families.

And you know what? The Republicans cheered that; 1,800 families are going to get \$172 billion.

They cheer the fact that up to \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts goes to corporate America, while, at the same time, giving them another tax break to send jobs overseas; at the same time, absolving them of any responsibility when it comes to State and local taxes; while insisting that individuals lose the State and local tax deduction, but corporations do not.

And listen to all of it. Were they cheering when they are saying to a teacher—hear their cheering when they say to a teacher: You may bring supplies to your school because your school and classes need that? God bless you for that. But we are taking away the tax deduction that goes with that.

What? Is that something to cheer about?

They are saying to students who get a \$2,500 tax deduction on interest on student loans: Forget about that. Even though it may make the difference between your attending college or not, forget about that. We are too busy giving a tax cut to the 1,800 wealthiest families in America so they can get \$172 billion in tax breaks over the next 10 years.

They are saying to families, whether they have a child with a disability, a senior with Alzheimer's, and everything in between: If you have extraordinary medical expenses, and, since 1944, you have been able to deduct them, no more. No more, because we have got to give it to the high end. So take that away.

Do you have any idea what that means to America's working families, and what it means for them if they have Alzheimer's?

We had one person come to our event in San Francisco last week from BARBARA LEE's district. She said there was over \$170,000 in costs for her because her husband has Alzheimer's. The tax deduction enabled them to survive. She said: I can't even imagine the cruelty that decided that this should happen in this tax bill.

So understand what this means in people's lives, and tell the truth about it. Tell the truth about it.

Republicans want you to believe that their trickle-down tax break for the rich will pay for itself. Never has happened.

As Bruce Bartlett, architect of Jack Kemp's supply-side economics said, "It is not true," that this trickle-down economics pays for itself. "It is not true. It is nonsense." And he went on to say it was "BS," in the full extent of those words.

This tax scam won't create jobs. It won't raise wages. It will only fill the coffers of the donors and the fat cats. The GOP tax scam will add trillions to the debt and stick our children with a bill that you cannot pay off.

And none of us will probably be around by the time the full impact of the hemorrhaging of the debt in the second 10 years of this bill will require big tax increases. Look to the Kansas example.

As I like to say to the Caucus, Mr. Speaker, maybe I have to use my mother-of-five voice to be heard. But as a mother of five and a grandmother of nine, we are supposed to be thinking about our children and their futures, and our grandchildren and their futures.

God willing, one day some of you will have grandchildren. I always ask the question: Do they breathe air? Do they drink water?

Why are you messing that up in other areas of our policymaking here?

But getting back to this. The tax scam won't create jobs. It won't raise wages. As I said: It will only fill the coffers of donors and the fat cats.

This GOP tax scam will add trillions to the debt. Oh where, oh where are the deficit hawks? Have you become extinct? Is there not one among you who understands what this does to the national debt?

And with all due respect to your leader, for him to put at our doorstep the debt, when it was a creation—President Bush went into office on a path from President Clinton of deficit reduction. The last five Clinton budgets were in balance or in surplus. President Bush turned that around by repealing pay-as-you-go. Tax cuts for the wealthy didn't trickle down. Two unpaid-for wars, giveaways to PHARMA, the pharmaceutical industry, taking us to a place—remember September of 2008, when we were in the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression?

But anyway, back to here. As Republicans know, our Republican friends have already shown us their playbook. In this bill, corporations will get a cut of \$1.5 trillion—the same \$1.5 trillion that Republicans plan to slash from Medicare and Medicaid in the GOP budget.

In their bones, the American people know they are getting a raw deal under the Republican bill before us. You know it. You know why you are here. You know what you are doing.

Democrats believe the American people deserve better, a better deal, better jobs, better wages, better future. We want to create good-paying jobs, raise workers' wages, lower the cost of living for families, give Americans the tools

they need to succeed in the 21st century. But you can't do that if you have a budget that does not invest in that future and is hampered by the cuts.

□ 1315

Let's go back to the drawing board. Let's write a bipartisan bill that raises wages, creates jobs, promotes growth, and reduces the deficit. To get to that place, we want to go to the table in a bipartisan way. What are you afraid of? In a bipartisan way, let's put together a tax bill that is good for the American people instead of one that does violence to the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "no" and to demand a better bill for America's working families.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' fabulous statement about this tax bill.

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF
CATHOLIC BISHOPS,

Washington, DC, November 9, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Decisions about taxation involve fundamental concerns of "justice and equity", with the goal of taxes and public spending "becoming an instrument of development and solidarity" (Mater et Magistra, 132; Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 355). On October 27, the USCCB offered six moral principles to guide debate on tax reform, centered on care for the poor and concern for families. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 contains many fundamental structural flaws that must be corrected. As currently written, the proposal is unacceptable.

Care for the Poor. Doubling the standard deduction will help some of those in poverty to avoid tax liability, and this is a positive good contained in the bill. However, as written, this proposal appears to be the first federal income tax modification in American history that will raise income taxes on the working poor while simultaneously providing a large tax cut to the wealthy. This is simply unconscionable. The nonpartisan congressional Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) indicates that by 2023 this tax plan will raise taxes on average tax payers making between \$20,000 and \$40,000 per year. Taxes for this group will be raised again in 2025, and again in 2027. Taxes will also increase on average taxpayers earning between \$10,000 and \$20,000 in 2025. The federal poverty line is \$12,228 for one person, and \$24,339 for a two-parent family with two children. Nearly one in three Americans live in a family with income below 200% of the poverty line. Meanwhile, average taxpayers who make over \$1 million experience dramatic tax cuts for the same periods. No tax reform proposal is acceptable that increases taxes for those living in poverty to help pay for benefits to wealthy citizens.

Several other tax provisions that assist the working poor and others who may struggle economically are also eliminated, including: the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which incentivizes hiring of the disabled, veterans, those who have been unemployed for long periods, and individuals receiving federal poverty-related assistance;

the tax deductions to reduce the burdens of tuition and student loans;

the income tax credit to persons who retire on disability;

the deduction for state and local income and sales taxes, which may impact people in higher tax states;

the tax deduction for employee business expenses; and

tax incentives to employers and employees to help with moving expenses for a new job. Strengthening Families. Society, in Pope Francis' words, is in "debt" to the family. The family is the most important institution in society because education, formation, and care for the human person, especially children, take place more in the family than anywhere else. Expanded access to schools of choice is a positive step in this legislation, and we would encourage Congress to go even further by empowering more parents in directing their child's education. We also appreciate that the legislation recognizes unborn children as eligible beneficiaries for parents' 529 education savings account contributions.

However, this tax plan places new and unreasonable burdens on families, especially those who welcome life or experience serious hardships:

It removes the adoption tax credit which provides important and life-affirming assistance for families to adopt children desperately in need of love and support.

The plan also repeals the exclusion for adoption assistance programs, which allows a family to exclude money paid by an employer for adoption costs up to the amount of the adoption tax credit as an alternative. This exclusion also allows those who adopt a child with special needs to receive the full value of the exclusion regardless of actual adoption costs.

Eliminating the credit and exclusion sends the wrong message about our national priorities, which ought to protect life, strengthen families, and affirm the value of every human being. The savings to society from children finding loving homes is well beyond any revenue lost due to the credit and exclusion.

It eliminates the personal exemption. Even with the doubling of the standard deduction, some larger families will pay more, including many two-parent families with more than three children, and single-parent families with more than one child. It is laudable that the child tax credit has been expanded and removes the marriage penalty. However, the modest increase in the credit does not fully compensate for the elimination of the personal exemption for some larger families. Moreover, because the child tax credit only remains refundable up to \$1,000, lower income families will get no additional benefits from the child tax credit, while suffering the full loss of the personal exemption.

It eliminates the out-of-pocket medical expenses deduction for families facing serious or chronic illness.

It eliminates tax incentives to employers to provide dependent care assistance or child care. The family flexibility credit, at \$300 per taxpayer, is some help, but is set to expire after five years and does not offset the greater losses.

It eliminates the qualified tuition reduction for children of teachers, which will raise taxes on educational institutions and disrupt family arrangements.

It repeals mortgage tax credit certificates, which are only available for first-time home buyers under certain income thresholds.

Other aspects of the plan also have consequences for families. By creating stricter rules around parents' social security numbers, the plan makes it more difficult for immigrant taxpayers to receive the Child Tax Credit or the Earned Income Tax Credit for their families, or to receive assistance in seeking advancement through education.

Progressivity of the Tax Code. Pope St. John XXIII wrote that a progressive tax code is required by "justice and equity." The "Unified Framework," upon which this tax

plan was based, promised that any new tax code would be "at least" as progressive as the present code. This plan breaks that promise. It raises taxes on the working poor, while simultaneously providing large tax breaks to high-income taxpayers. It also repeals the estate tax (which applies to the estates of single people valued at more than \$5.5 million and married couples valued greater than \$11 million), and eliminates the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) which was designed to prevent high-income earners from avoiding tax liability through loopholes. In the years that the working poor suffer a tax increase under this bill, millionaires and billionaires will see significant tax decreases. This must be fixed. Those who stand to benefit the most from proposed tax policies ought to be the ones to bear most of the risk associated with them, rather than those who are struggling and in need.

Adequate Revenue for the Common Good and Avoiding Future Cuts to Poverty Programs. The state has a legitimate role in promoting the common good, and a legitimate interest in collecting taxes to do so. This tax plan, by design, will result in a nearly \$1.5 trillion deficit over ten years. Even with the potential benefits of economic growth from individual and corporate tax cuts—which cannot be guaranteed—the poor should not be the ones to finance these changes. Undoubtedly, the deficit will be used as an argument to further restrict or end programs that help those in need, programs which are investments to help pull struggling families out of poverty. Repeal of the AMT and estate tax alone comprise a good portion of the deficit that is built into the plan. Rather than exploring even modest reductions to these dramatic cuts for the wealthiest, the bill raises taxes on the vulnerable and creates a strong incentive to cut the social safety net.

Incentive for Charitable Giving and Development. Doubling the standard deduction will bring tax relief to many people. However, for those who give to charity, it will make the charitable deduction increasingly a benefit only available to high income families. An "above-the-line" deduction would incentivize and assist charitable giving at all income levels, and increase the amounts people can give. It would also guard against a multi-billion-dollar decrease in charitable giving that this plan would otherwise cause, shrinking civil society and cutting income to nonprofits that help the poor, just as government aid to the poor is jeopardized, as noted above. By and large, money given to charity helps those in need. The tax code should encourage voluntary association, mutual aid, and a culture of giving, helping rather than hurting groups that will be asked to do more for the poor in the days ahead. Similarly, this plan will lower the value of affordable housing and community revitalization incentives. Public-private partnerships that benefit the poor and the greater community should not be discouraged.

Because tax policy is far-reaching, Congress must provide ample time for Americans to discuss the complexities of these reforms and fully understand their effects. The current timetable does not provide adequate time for that discussion. In many ways, this legislation is unacceptable in its present form and requires amendment. It must be changed for the sake of families—the bedrock of our country—and for those struggling on the peripheries of society who have a claim on our national conscience.

Sincerely,

MOST REVEREND FRANK J.

DEWANE,

*Bishop of Venice,
Chairman, Committee on Domestic*

Justice and Human Development.
 MOST REV. GEORGE V. MURRY, S.J.,
Bishop of Youngstown, Chairman, Committee on Catholic Education.
 MOST REVEREND OSCAR CANTÚ,
Bishop of Las Cruces, Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace.

Ms. PELOSI. I return to one of their statements: "... this proposal appears to be the first Federal income tax modification in American history that will raise income taxes on the working poor while simultaneously providing a large tax cut for the wealthy."

The Senate is not going to make it better. They have already said they are raising taxes on those making under \$75,000 and giving tax cuts to the wealthy. They have already said they are going to take affordable care away from 13 million Americans.

I don't know how that is making it better. That might be something you applaud, but I certainly hope you would not vote for it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, no one man has plowed the field for tax reform for more years, more boldly, or more effectively than the Speaker of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, first, I love this 1 minute, and I try not to abuse it too much, but I am going to right now.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by thanking Chairman KEVIN BRADY and all of the members of the House Ways and Means Committee for this job well done.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a generational defining moment for our country, and what we are doing here—what we are doing here—is not just determining the kind of Tax Code we are going to have, what we are doing here is determining the kind of country we are going to have.

Right now, because of this anemic economic recovery—don't forget, we had the worst recession in our lifetimes in 2008, and ever since then this economy has been flat. This economy has been way under its potential. This economy has been growing at a limp 1 to 2 percent.

Do you know what that means for hardworking taxpayers? Do you know what that means for Americans? Nobody gets a wage increase. Living standards are stagnant. Economic anxiety is high.

Seventy-eight percent of our workers in this country today are living pay-

check to paycheck. Most Americans say that they don't even have \$500 in their bank account for an unexpected emergency or an expense. This is the economic anxiety that is for real in this country today. Instead of thinking about getting ahead, families are just struggling to get by.

Think about all the moms and the dads and the hardworking taxpayers going to bed tonight and not sleeping, worried about what comes next week. This is not how it should be. This is not how it is in this country traditionally.

We need to restore growth. We need to restore opportunity. We need to restore this beautiful thing we affectionately call the American idea. Passing this bill is the single biggest thing we can do to grow the economy, to restore opportunity, and to help these middle-income families who are struggling.

People always ask: Well, what is it for me? How do I benefit from this?

I am a chart guy.

Why is this important? What this shows you, under this plan, the average family at every income level gets a tax cut, a tax cut at every average level.

What this chart shows you, the people here who are struggling, the people here who are in middle-income brackets, the people here in low income trying to become middle income, they get the biggest tax cuts.

This plan is good for people in all walks of life all across the country, and the bigger relief goes to those who need it most.

Let's put it into numbers.

A typical household of four people, they make \$59,000 in this country. That family of four gets an \$1,182 tax cut the first year alone.

The median family income, Mom, Dad, two kids, the median family income in America today is \$87,000. That family will get a \$1,941 tax cut right away, year one. If you are one of those 57 percent of Americans who say you don't even have \$500 to go through an emergency, this really helps you.

Let's talk about those people who itemize their taxes, who live in high-tax States. Let's talk about a couple making \$1115,000, living a high-tax State. Let's say they have \$8,400 in a mortgage interest payment and \$6,900 in property taxes for the year. They can still write all of those off under this plan, and they will still see a tax cut of \$1,130; if they have kids, an even larger tax cut.

Not only do people get to keep more of their own money in their own pocket, but we dramatically simplify the tax system. We make it more fair.

Today, 7 out of 10 Americans don't itemize their deductions. That means 70 percent of Americans take what we call the standard deduction for their taxes. It is just that. It is standard. It is straightforward. You are not taxed on that income.

But over the years, Washington has piled on special interest loophole after special interest loophole after special interest loophole. These loopholes are

skewed to the people who are wealthy, who are well connected, who can afford all the tax lawyers and all the accountants to navigate the Tax Code so they can get a good deal. But if you are not in that group, if you don't have the lawyers and the accountants and you are just scraping away with your middle income, you don't get those deals.

What we want to do is take those loopholes away, make it fair for everybody, lower tax rates, and make it easy.

Here is how easy this gets. We are going to make it so easy that, by doubling the standard deduction, 90 percent of Americans, 9 out of 10 Americans, will be able to fill out their taxes on a form the size of a postcard. What this means is, for a single person, you don't pay taxes on your first \$12,000 of income. For a married couple, you don't pay taxes on your first \$24,000 of income.

Here is the basic philosophy. Instead of jumping through all the hoops that the IRS puts in front of you, instead of doing what the special interest groups say you need to do in order to get some of your money back, we basically say: Keep your money in the first place. It is your money. Do what you want with it.

All of this is about tax relief. It is about fairness. It is about simplicity. It is about easing the stress and anxiety that is in this country.

What we really need to do is we need better jobs, more jobs, faster economic growth, higher wages.

This brings us to the way we tax ourselves as businesses. This brings us to what do we do to make America the most competitive place in the world.

Here is the real problem we have got when it comes to the way we tax our businesses. We are the worst in the world at it. We, right now, tax our businesses at the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world.

What does that do? Well, let me give you an example of where I come from.

In Wisconsin, the example is Johnson Controls. Johnson Controls is a company with a history dating back, in our State, to the 1880s. It was the biggest company we had headquartered in Wisconsin. Not anymore, because Johnson Controls is an Irish company, and their Irish tax rate is 12½ percent.

This is happening all over the country. Companies, just to stay competitive, are becoming foreign companies. And when the headquarters of that company leaves your hometown, when the headquarters of that business and that employer leaves your State and goes to another country, there goes the United Way Campaign. There goes the white-collar jobs. There goes the manufacturing. There goes the research and development. There goes America's competitiveness.

What is worse is all these foreign companies are buying U.S. companies because it is cheaper because of taxes.

Here is what we do. Instead of being the worst in the pack, we leapfrog ourselves by bringing that tax rate down

to 20 percent. Because, guess what. When you tax your businesses at much, much higher tax rates than our foreign competitors tax theirs, they win and we lose. We have got to stop losing. We have got to start winning. That is what this does.

What is even more impressive about this is it lowers taxes for those small businesses, those mom-and-pops even more. We have got to make sure that our businesses, the job creators of America, have every incentive to stay here, have every incentive to build here, have every incentive to hire here.

What is more, we are finding that by doing this, we are going to get faster economic growth. We are going to get more jobs. We are going to get higher wages, better take-home pay.

Let me just break it down in simple numbers.

The Tax Foundation ran the numbers. The nonpartisan Tax Foundation said, with this bill, we will get faster growth, about 3½ percent faster economic growth. We will get about 890,000 new jobs. They estimate that in New York State alone, 57,834 new jobs; in Wisconsin, 17,999 new jobs; in California, 101,422 new jobs; in Texas, 74,037 new jobs. You get these new jobs when you grow this economy. You pass this bill, you grow this economy.

So why do we do all of this? Because it is about giving people more take-home pay. It is about raising wages. It is about helping families that are struggling to get ahead. It is about getting Washington out of the business of picking winners and losers and giving the American people the kind of economy they deserve, the kind of economy we can have.

This just shows you that across every income scale across the board, wages will go up because we are going to grow the economy. Most of the wage growth goes to the people who need it most, people who are in the middle, people who are struggling. That is why we are here.

Right now, we are in the middle of a long day where people are working tooth and nail in their jobs. We are right here in the middle of a day where America's workers are trying to figure out how they are going to make ends meet, how they are going to keep up with everything.

Those people, the hardworking taxpayers of this country that we represent, that is why we are here. This is why we are doing this. They are the foundation of this country. We are here today for them.

The special interest groups are trying to protect their piece of the pie. All the negativity you see out there, there is probably a special interest group back there trying to keep their special niche in the Tax Code.

It is high time we root that out, we don't settle for the status quo, and we give people the kind of Tax Code that they need and they deserve. It has been 31 years since we last did this, and it is finally time that we get the general in-

terests of this country to prevail over the special interests in Washington.

We know that this brings more fairness. We know that this increases take-home pay, bigger paychecks, and we know that this grows the economy and creates more opportunities.

Faster economic growth is not going to fix every problem America has, but faster economic growth is going to help us solve every problem America has.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues today to raise their gaze and do something bold, to see the forest through the trees, to think about the people we are here to actually represent, to think about the people who are struggling, who are going to go to bed tonight and probably not sleep because they are worried about what is going to happen tomorrow. That is what this is. This is one of the most historic and the biggest things that we will ever do.

□ 1330

And the reason is because this is one of the biggest things we can do to improve people's lives, to revitalize that beautiful American idea, to spread liberty and freedom. This is something that is going to refresh our confidence in ourselves and our confidence in each other.

Enough settling. Enough giving in. Let's start to reclaim our future right here in this moment, in this Chamber. In this moment, let's pass this bill.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, more jobs, bigger paychecks, and fairer taxes. Those are the three big promises of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and I am proud to lend my support.

This tax relief legislation serves as an opportunity for all American families to achieve the American dream—because it is crafted with working families and providing relief for the middle class in mind.

This bill does much to reform and revitalize the tax code. I look forward to doing even more to assist American families and communities, ensure U.S. companies can fairly compete with foreign counterparts, and close existing loopholes in our laws. For years, our nation's high corporate tax rate has created an unlevel playing field for U.S. businesses to compete in global markets. By reducing rates and moving to a territorial system much in line with those of our international competitors, we will incentivize companies to build investment here, thereby creating new jobs and increasing take-home pay for hardworking Americans.

Further compounding this problem is the ability, in some industries, for foreign-based competitors to exploit loopholes in the tax code to avoid taxes altogether. For instance, under current law foreign-based reinsurers to transfer a portion of their profits to offshore tax havens, and thus shielded from our corporate tax rate, has essentially gutted the domestic reinsurance industry over; the last two decades. Rather than allowing our domestic insurers to effectively compete, this uneven and unfair playing field instead promotes the use of foreign inversions and affiliate transactions to achieve a lower tax rate. This environment erodes the U.S. tax base to the tune of billions, and forces U.S. insurers to decide

whether solely-domestic operations, which many have maintained for decades, is worth paying a higher effective tax rate. Mr. Speaker, these are not decisions that our tax code should force on job creators.

As our country competes with the rest of world in a 21st century global economy, it is essential that our tax policies offer opportunities for job creators in the United States of all sizes to grow, thrive, create jobs, and increase the take-home pay for all hard-working Americans so that they may thrive and seek their dreams.

As the U.S. economic engine drives forward, aided significantly by the passage of this historic legislation, we must also ensure that neglected and distressed communities are kept in mind. My district in southern Ohio has leveraged the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) and Historic Tax Credit (HTC) to bring hundreds of millions of dollars of investment to such areas, and the net result is thousands of permanent new jobs and housing units in my district alone.

Given the positive impacts these pro-growth credits have had in my district and across the country, I was hopeful for the preservation of NMTC and HTC as my colleagues on the Ways & Means Committee crafted this legislation. While H.R. 1 would repeal both credits, the Senate's proposal would retain the NMTC and a modified version of the HTC. I hope the House and Senate come to a productive solution in conference.

More broadly, I encourage my colleagues in the upcoming House and Senate conference process to produce a final version that will ensure our tax relief creates a level playing field for all competitors in an interconnected world, and realizes the vast potential of our nation's overlooked communities.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of America's future generations who will be saddled with an unsurmountable debt created by H.R. 1, the Republican Tax plan, I must object to it. This rushed piece of legislation will not only add more than \$1.7 trillion to the national debt over the next 10 years, but it will also shift the burden of paying for that debt to our hard working families.

Despite our Republican colleagues' assertions that this tax plan will benefit the majority of Americans, numerous economists disagree. They note that nearly 45 percent of all households with children will see a tax increase, while 80 percent of our wealthiest citizens will receive a tax cut by 2027.

Even more egregious, this tax bill seeks to eliminate the long-standing State and Local Tax deduction, subjecting every wage earner's income to double taxation. This defeats the original framers' intent to avoid a system of double taxation.

The original tax code, drafted in 1913, consisted of three pages in its entirety and included the State and Local Tax deduction at the core of its responsible tax policy to ensure state and local governments could raise revenues for public schools, police, fire, and emergency services.

Plain and simple, this tax plan is a tremendous windfall for our wealthiest 1 percent and large corporations. It favors large businesses over small businesses, it favors sending jobs overseas rather than creating jobs at home, it favors the wealthy over hourly wage earners, and it pays for these tax cuts for the wealthy by raising taxes on our middle class families

to the detriment of Medicare, Medicaid, education, and other vital public services.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, this bill is so skewed to benefit the wealthiest 1 percent in America that it could more accurately be named, “H.R. 1 percent” I urge my colleagues to support the 99 percent of Americans instead, and to oppose this plan. Vote no on H.R. 1.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, today is a good day for hardworking Americans. We are considering legislation that let's taxpayers keep more of their paycheck to save, spend, and invest as they see fit.

Our bill—the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act—will overhaul our broken tax code and finally put the American taxpayer first. Because we can all agree that hardworking taxpayers are the losers under the current system. Right now, our tax code rewards lawyers, lobbyists and loopholes—while leaving hardworking families and job creators behind.

The bill we are considering today will change all of that. To me, there is only one special interest group that matters—and that is the American people.

That's why we simplify the tax code and cut taxes for all Americans to ensure hardworking Americans—like the people I represent in Southeast Texas—can keep more of their hard-earned money.

It has been more than 30 years since the last time we overhauled our tax code. And since then it has grown to more than 70,000 pages.

I like to put it this way . . . our current tax code is now longer than the Bible with none of the good news. Over the past 30 years, Washington has piled up all these carveouts and loopholes for special interests—making things far too complicated and far too expensive for hardworking families.

This needs to end—and today the House will take a historic step to fix that and deliver long overdue tax relief to the American people. Here are the details:

First, we get rid of loopholes. Then we use that money to lower taxes. And then, we simplify the code altogether.

Now, instead of seven confusing tax brackets and carveouts, there will be just four—making things so simple that you can file your taxes on a postcard.

Importantly, we also double the standard deduction, increase the child tax credit, eliminate the Death Tax, and preserve the home mortgage interest deduction.

In addition—to help create more good jobs right here in America—we lower the tax rate on job creators from 35 percent down to 20 percent.

Today, many of America's biggest job producers face the highest tax rate in the world—which makes America less competitive and forces jobs overseas.

We fix that in our bill—because we want companies to invest, grow and produce jobs right here in America. We also reduce the tax rate on the income earned by small businesses to no more than 25 percent—the lowest tax rate on small business income since World War II.

Folks, let's not forget. When we reformed the tax system over 30 years ago, it led to an explosion in jobs and economic growth.

With the passage of this bill, we will be on the verge of achieving such greatness again. This is an exciting time—and the American people deserve some good news.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate to quickly follow our lead and get a bill passed so we can deliver a tax relief bill to the American people before Christmas.

For more details on our bill, please visit www.FairAndSimple.GOP. Thank you—and God bless.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 619, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on passage of the bill will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3109, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 205, not voting 2, as follows:

[Roll No. 637]

YEAS—227

Abraham	Davis, Rodney	Jenkins (KS)
Aderholt	Denham	Jenkins (WV)
Allen	Dent	Johnson (LA)
Amash	DeSantis	Johnson (OH)
Amodei	DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam
Arrington	Diaz-Balart	Jordan
Babin	Duffy	Joyce (OH)
Bacon	Duncan (SC)	Katko
Banks (IN)	Duncan (TN)	Kelly (MS)
Barletta	Dunn	Kelly (PA)
Barr	Emmer	King (IA)
Barton	Estes (KS)	Kinzinger
Bergman	Farenthold	Knight
Biggs	Ferguson	Kustoff (TN)
Bilirakis	Fitzpatrick	Labrador
Bishop (MI)	Fleischmann	LaHood
Bishop (UT)	Flores	LaMalfa
Black	Fortenberry	Lamborn
Blackburn	Fox	Latta
Blum	Franks (AZ)	Lewis (MN)
Bost	Gaetz	Long
Brady (TX)	Gallagher	Loudermilk
Brat	Garrett	Love
Bridenstine	Gianforte	Lucas
Brooks (AL)	Gibbs	Luetkemeyer
Brooks (IN)	Gohmert	MacArthur
Buchanan	Goodlatte	Marchant
Buck	Gosar	Marino
Bucshon	Gowdy	Marshall
Budd	Granger	Massie
Burgess	Graves (GA)	Mast
Byrne	Graves (LA)	McCarthy
Calvert	Graves (MO)	McCaul
Carter (GA)	Griffith	McHenry
Carter (TX)	Grothman	McKinley
Chabot	Guthrie	McMorris
Cheney	Handel	Rodgers
Coffman	Harper	McSally
Cole	Harris	Meadows
Collins (GA)	Hartzler	Meehan
Collins (NY)	Hensarling	Messer
Comer	Herrera Beutler	Mitchell
Comstock	Hice, Jody B.	Moolenaar
Conaway	Higgins (LA)	Mooney (WV)
Cook	Hill	Mullin
Costello (PA)	Holding	Newhouse
Cramer	Hollingsworth	Noem
Crawford	Hudson	Norman
Culberson	Huizenga	Nunes
Curbelo (FL)	Hultgren	Olson
Curtis	Hunter	Palazzo
Davidson	Hurd	Palmer

Paulsen	Royce (CA)	Trott
Pearce	Russell	Turner
Perry	Rutherford	Upton
Pittenger	Ryan (WI)	Valadao
Poe (TX)	Sanford	Wagner
Poliquin	Scalise	Walberg
Posey	Schweikert	Walden
Ratcliffe	Scott, Austin	Walker
Reed	Sensenbrenner	Walorski
Reichert	Sessions	Walters, Mimi
Renacci	Shimkus	Weber (TX)
Rice (SC)	Shuster	Webster (FL)
Roby	Simpson	Wenstrup
Roe (TN)	Smith (MO)	Westerman
Rogers (AL)	Smith (NE)	Williams
Rogers (KY)	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)
Rokita	Smucker	Wittman
Rooney, Francis	Stewart	Womack
Rooney, Thomas J.	Stivers	Woodall
Ros-Lehtinen	Taylor	Yoder
Roskam	Tenney	Yoho
Ross	Thompson (PA)	Young (AK)
Rothfus	Thornberry	Young (IA)
Rouzer	Tiberi	
	Tipton	

NAYS—205

Adams	Gallego	Napolitano
Aguilar	Garamendi	Neal
Barragán	Gomez	Nolan
Bass	Gonzalez (TX)	Norcross
Beatty	Gottheimer	O'Halleran
Bera	Green, Al	O'Rourke
Beyer	Green, Gene	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Grijalva	Panetta
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Pascarell
Blunt Rochester	Hanabusa	Payne
Bonamici	Hastings	Pelosi
Boyle, Brendan F.	Heck	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Higgins (NY)	Peters
Brown (MD)	Himes	Peterson
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Pingree
Bustos	Huffman	Polis
Butterfield	Issa	Price (NC)
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Carbajal	Jayapal	Raskin
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Rice (NY)
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Rohrabacher
Castor (FL)	Jones	Rosen
Castro (TX)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Chu, Judy	Keating	Ruiz
Cicilline	Kelly (IL)	Ruppersberger
Clark (MA)	Kennedy	Rush
Clarke (NY)	Khanna	Ryan (OH)
Clay	Kihuen	Sánchez
Cleaver	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Cohen	Kind	Schiff
Connolly	King (NY)	Schneider
Conyers	Krishnamoorthi	Schrader
Cooper	Kuster (NH)	Scott (VA)
Correa	Lance	Scott, David
Costa	Langevin	Serrano
Courtney	Larsen (WA)	Sewell (AL)
Crist	Larson (CT)	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lawrence	Sherman
Cuellar	Lawson (FL)	Sinema
Cummings	Lee	Sires
Davis (CA)	Levin	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lewis (GA)	Smith (NJ)
DeFazio	Lieu, Ted	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lipinski	Soto
Delaney	LoBiondo	Speier
DeLauro	Loeback	Stefanik
DelBene	Loftgren	Suozi
Demings	Lowenthal	Swalwell (CA)
DeSaulnier	Lowe	Takano
Deutch	Lujan Grisham,	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	M.	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Luján, Ben Ray	
Donovan	Titus	
Doyle, Michael F.	Tonko	
Ellison	Torres	
Engel	Maloney,	
Eshoo	Carolyn B.	
Españat	Maloney, Sean	
Esty (CT)	Matsui	
Evans	McClintock	
Faso	McCollum	
Foster	McEachin	
Frankel (FL)	McGovern	
Frelinghuysen	McNerney	
Fudge	Meeks	
Gabbard	Meng	
	Moore	
	Moulton	
	Murphy (FL)	
	Nadler	

NOT VOTING—2

Pocan

Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1348

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 619, the title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 637.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

SR. CHIEF RYAN OWENS POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNN). The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 3109) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1114 North 2nd Street in Chillicothe, Illinois, as the "Sr. Chief Ryan Owens Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3109.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO UNITED STATES CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2081, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Member on the part of the House to the United States Capitol Preservation Commission:

Mrs. COMSTOCK, Virginia

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

NOVEMBER 16, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to Section 5 of the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission Act (Pub. L. 1151-77), I am pleased to appoint the following Member to serve as a Commissioner to the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission:

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton of Washington, District of Columbia

And from private life:

Mr. Kenneth B. Morris, Jr. of Orange, California

Thank you for your attention to these recommendations.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

TAX CUTS AND MORE JOBS FOR MONTANANS

(Mr. GIANFORTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will increase paychecks for hardworking Montanans, create Montana jobs, and unleash economic growth.

In fact, analysis from the non-partisan Tax Foundation finds the bill will create nearly 2,900 Montana jobs and will increase income for median Montana households by \$2,200.

Hardworking Montanans will see a big tax break by cutting their rates and by doubling the standard deduction. Montana families will benefit from an increased child tax credit.

Today, only about one in four Montanans itemize their deductions—filling out stacks of paperwork for hours after saving piles of receipts. With tax reform, those days are over. Under the new plan, nine out of ten Americans won't have to itemize to see their full tax benefit, and they will file their taxes on something like a postcard.

I am proud to vote for tax reform that will create thousands of Montana jobs, ensure hardworking Montanans keep more of what they earn, and help small businesses.

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

(Mr. O'HALLERAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support Small Business Saturday on November 25.

Small Business Saturday takes place every year on the Saturday after

Thanksgiving. It is a day for Americans to support their community and their local businesses. As a former small-business owner myself, I know the value that our small, locally owned businesses add to our local economy.

Arizona is the proud home of more than 500,000 small businesses that employ nearly 1 million Arizonans. These small businesses are the lifeblood of our local economies, and they are vital to the future of our communities. Our entrepreneurs are local community leaders. They hire local employees and they contribute to local causes.

This holiday shopping season, we have the chance to show appreciation for our local businesses and all they do for our communities. I encourage all Americans to go out and shop at their favorite local small businesses or dine at their favorite local restaurant and support Small Business Saturday on November 25.

□ 1400

BENEFITS OF TAX BILL

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

With Chairman BRADY's leadership, my colleagues and I worked hard to combine our ideas to help Americans across the Nation have lower taxes, better careers, and more money in their family budget.

Over the past year, it has been a collaborative effort. I have listened to and worked with people and businesses about their ideas on tax reform from all across the Second Congressional District of Arkansas. With today's vote, we are one step closer to reforming our broken Tax Code.

Over the past several months, we have worked to reduce taxes on families and let them keep more of their money. For businesses, we want to have a more competitive tax system that promotes investment, which will spur our economic growth and family prosperity.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, H.R. 1 will raise after-tax incomes for hardworking Arkansans by over \$2,000. Furthermore, H.R. 1 benefits families by increasing the child tax credit to \$1,600, instead of \$1,000. That helps over 50,000 taxpayers in my district.

By passing this bill, it could lead to the creation of an additional 5,000 jobs.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEVE MOSTYN

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the very sad task, as we begin the season of Thanksgiving, of announcing the passing of my dear friend,

Steve Mostyn, a great Texan, a great American, husband, father, and friend. We pray for him; his beautiful wife, Amber; and his children.

Today, I ask, in the spirit of our faith, if Members will join me in a moment of silence for the passing of Steve Mostyn.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 637.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

(Mr. GARRETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, in the realm of humanity, that which is cobbled together by humans is rarely perfect. So, too, the tax reform that we undertook today is not perfect; however, it was overdue, and it is good.

Candidly, any legislation contemplated that was last addressed when I weighed 112 pounds and had a full head of hair is long overdue.

Having said that, I can find some fault. And I would submit that it is with the confidence and belief in the leadership of this Chamber and the relevant committees that will discuss the maintenance of the historic preservation tax credit, which is included in the Senate version of this bill, that I cast my ballot today.

I think that is a worthwhile investment in revitalizing downtrodden areas. I want to make my voice known publicly, loudly, and on the record.

I also hope that Members of this body, on both sides of the aisle, would consider the opportunity for students to remove themselves from the dark cloud of student loan debt by virtue of reviewing the Student Security Act that will be unveiled here within the next 24 hours.

TAX BREAK FOR THE WEALTHIEST AMONG US

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, what happened today on this floor was a massive tax break for the wealthiest people in our country.

Over half of the tax dollars will go to people in the upper 1 percent of the income strata. The big pot of gold at the end is eliminating the inheritance tax by the year 2024, so that the heirs of the richest will get millions and hundreds of millions and billions in tax relief.

This bill should have been geared toward the middle class. The middle class is getting tip change from a cheap restaurant, while the millionaires and billionaires are getting away with no AMT tax, changed rates at the top, and inheritance tax changes.

They get the money. The middle class gets shafted. It is a con job. It is a shame.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JACK TOLBERT

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Korean war veteran Jack Tolbert, who passed away this month at the age of 94.

He was a long-time resident of Redding, California, for over 50 years, and was originally a Texas native. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroism in Korea.

In 1953, his outpost came under attack. A Chinese soldier hurled a grenade into Sergeant Tolbert's bunker. In an incredible moment of selfless bravery, Jack hurled himself on the grenade to shield his fellow soldiers from the explosion and injury or even death. Jack lost both his legs, among numerous other injuries.

Though he would never admit it himself, Jack truly was a hero for having protected his brothers in arms. I knew him personally. It was always a joy to see Jack at events in the Redding area. He was always full of joy. He had a joke and slap on the back. He never let his condition get him down. He was always one of the most positive people in the room and a joy to be around.

We will miss Jack dearly, but we are all blessed to have him in our lives, whether it was his service in Korea or his time as our neighbor in Shasta County.

God bless him and his family.

STAND FOR PROGRAMS THAT BENEFIT AMERICA'S CHILDREN

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let us never forget that the GOP tax scam will harm real people.

On Tuesday afternoon, 42 high school students from the Cristo Rey Newark High School were here at the Capitol, urging me to vote against the GOP tax scam.

Mr. Speaker, the young people I met with are from financially struggling families. They worked hard and got accepted into an innovative school to gain professional skills. The students take part in a corporate work study program. Their earnings go towards their college preparatory education. The model works.

Last year, 100 percent of Cristo Rey Newark's students were accepted into 4-year colleges. Under the GOP tax scam, these bright, young people from financially disadvantaged families will have to pay taxes on their work study earnings—taxes they cannot afford.

That is wrong. I will continue to stand up against the GOP tax scam and

stand for programs that benefit America's children.

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Bible Week.

For thousands of years, the Bible has been a source of guidance and strength for humanity. During times of turmoil and confusion, I can think of no more important source of comfort than the wisdom provided in the Good Book.

The Bible serves as a profound influence in my life, as well as others in this Chamber. Many of us gather weekly for prayer breakfasts and Bible study.

The Bible offers us hope when circumstances are dire and is a source of strength when human frailty brings us low. As we read in the Gospel of Matthew: "Come unto me, all ye that labor under heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Next week, as we celebrate Thanksgiving, my prayer is that it will be a time of healing and unity for all. As we reflect on the blessings God has provided, I hope we will also celebrate the gift God provides us daily through His holy word.

TAX BURDEN ON HARDWORKING FAMILIES

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes ago, on the floor of the House of Representatives, we saw a vote on what has been called the middle class tax cut. Unfortunately, I am here to remind all of us, Mr. Speaker, that it really is a tax scam.

When we have looked into the many communities across America and seen families like the hardworking families in the district that I represent in California, the average family or household that files a tax return every April 15 makes an average income of about \$69,000.

That family, according to what was just passed on this floor, is going to be leaving behind over \$1,000 more than they normally would have when they do their taxes. That hurts. That family is a hardworking family. That family cannot afford to miss out on \$1,000 of their hard-earned money.

I heard people say earlier that that is not going to happen. That is just not true.

FIGHTING FOR AMERICAN BUSINESSES

(Mr. BUDD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, the House just only moments ago passed historic

tax reform. I am proud to have supported it.

In conference, we will have the opportunity to improve the bill. There is one issue I would like to raise for them: closing the Bermuda loophole.

Basically, how it works is that a company located in Bermuda strips revenue out of its U.S. branch and then invests that revenue under Bermuda tax law, meaning the company pays virtually nothing in taxes on that income. It is a crippling advantage.

Companies that stay in America are getting killed. We have had two massive inversions in 2 years to Bermuda and Switzerland. The number of foreign property casualty insurers in the top 25 has increased sevenfold since 1990.

Closing this loophole is in the Senate bill, and it was in the last tax reform proposal. It also raises \$8.7 billion in revenue. That is in addition to the countless jobs and proud American businesses that it would save.

We can't have a Tax Code that destroys American business. We have got to close this loophole.

THE REPUBLICAN TAX BILL IS A BLOW TO SENIORS AND FAMILIES

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1, the Republican tax bill, which is a giveaway to corporations and the richest 1 percent, and a tax hike on working class Americans and their children.

It is unconscionable, as it cripples the State and local tax deductions. Thirty percent of my residents will lose these deductions, averaging \$17,000 per family, according to the IRS, which will devastate housing affordability in my district and disadvantage California taxpayers, compared to other States.

It cruelly eliminates the medical expense tax deduction worth over \$10,000. This is a direct blow to seniors and families in my district who have long-term medical needs, as well as families with children who have severe disabilities.

The House bill is terrible, but the Senate wants to include a repeal of the Affordable Care Act in their bill, making it even more painful for working families. This would kick millions of Americans off their health insurance plan, spike premiums, and undermine our entire healthcare system.

It also abolishes the tax-exempt status of private activity bonds used by San Gabriel Valley cities, water agencies, and transportation agencies to provide low-cost financing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters from the League of California Cities, the California Department of Finance, the California State Treasurer, and the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership in opposition to H.R. 1.

LEAGUE® OF CALIFORNIA CITIES,
CSAC, CALED, CSBA, CALI-
FORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REAL-
TORS®,

November 9, 2017.

For Immediate Release.

COALITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADERS, SCHOOLS AND REALTORS URGE CALIFORNIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO REJECT TAX REFORMS THAT HARM TAXPAYERS, HOMEOWNERS AND THE ECONOMY

CALIFORNIA WOULD BE ONE OF THE STATES TO LOSE THE MOST FROM PROPOSED REFORMS

SACRAMENTO.—The associations representing California's local governments, economic development leaders, schools and realtors urge the California congressional delegation to protect the State and Local Tax deduction and a key economic development tool at risk under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in its current form.

The SALT deduction makes the cost of living more affordable in states like California. Eliminating the deduction for state and local income taxes and capping the local property tax deduction at \$10,000 would hurt hard-working California families and only add to the housing affordability crisis in the state by eliminating a key incentive for homeownership. In 2015, 6.1 million California taxpayers claimed the SALT deduction with the average deduction at around \$18,000.

The SALT deduction has been an integral component of the federal tax code since its creation in 1913 and was one of the six deductions allowed under the original tax code. Eliminating or capping federal deductibility for state and local property, sales and income taxes would represent double taxation and would upset the carefully balanced fiscal federalism that has existed since the permanent creation of the federal income tax over 100 years ago.

Tax-exempt Private Activity Bonds (PABs) are an important tool for state and local governments to help finance major public projects, including transportation and water infrastructure, affordable housing construction, schools—all of which are essential for job growth, healthy economies, safe communities and the nation's economy. Eliminating PABs' tax-exempt status would drive up the costs of borrowing for these projects by 25-25 percent and be a disincentive to spurring private sector investment in our communities.

Given the impact on California families and our economy, we respectfully urge the California congressional delegation to oppose eliminating or capping the SALT deduction or removing the exemption on PABs as part of any tax reform proposal.

QUOTES FROM COALITION LEADERS

Carolyn Coleman, Executive Director, League of California Cities: "Hard working California tax payers and our communities would be harmed by the current proposal. We hope that California's congressional delegation hears this message and takes swift action to reject any proposals that would cause people to pay taxes on their income twice, would destabilize key incentives for homeownership and increase borrowing costs for state and local governments to finance projects that benefit our communities."

Matt Cate, Executive Director, California State Association of Counties: "California Counties are increasingly concerned with several provisions in the House tax reform package. The narrowing of the SALT deduction alone would impact county resources and their ability to meet the service needs of the public. The additional changes to infrastructure financing tools, including the taxable status of Private Activity Bonds (PABs) and the ability to advance refund municipal

bonds, will fundamentally harm the way counties do business on behalf of our residents."

Gurbax Sahota, President and CEO, California Association for Local Economic Development: "The current tax proposal eliminates Private Activity Bonds—eliminating an important economic development financing tool California uses to fund manufacturing expansion, health care facilities, affordable housing, schools, nonprofits, and other economic development projects. Combined with a repeal of advance refunding bonds, this will absolutely impact our ability to attract investment to future projects like these, as well as our ability to create and retain jobs in these areas. These provisions are bad for California and our residents."

Vernon M. Billy, CEO and Executive Director, California School Boards Association: "We urge the California delegation to act on behalf of the taxpayers in California who would be hurt by the elimination of the SALT deduction, including the talented school employees who work in our schools educating and training students. Eliminating the deduction has the same impact as raising property, income and sales taxes in every congressional district in our state. By effectively raising property taxes, the deduction also makes local school bonds more expensive, complicating our efforts to build and repair schools and provide students with the resources needed for a high-quality 21st century education."

Steve White, President, California Association of REALTORS: "The move by Congress to eliminate state and local tax deductions essentially levies a double tax on California, this and other attacks on real estate tax incentives removes the tax benefits for people to buy homes and raises taxes on hundreds of thousands of Californians. Homeownership has and continues to be the best way for families to grow wealth and increase the middle class. Congress should look at ways to incentivize and increase homeownership rates, not increase taxes on families wanting to buy a home."

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE,

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR,

Sacramento, CA, November 9, 2017.

CALIFORNIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION: As the Governor's chief fiscal advisor, I write to express the Administration's significant concerns with several provisions currently contained in H.R. 1 measure now under consideration before the Ways and Means Committee.

Removing the state and local tax (SALT) deductions while capping the property tax deduction at \$10,000—Over 6 million California tax returns—one of every three—claim SALT deductions, including millions of middle-income households that may not benefit from the increased standard deduction. While allowing up to a \$10,000 deduction on property taxes provides some offset, only one-fourth of the state and local tax deduction consists of property taxes paid. The average deduction for state and local income taxes alone is nearly \$16,000 per return, while state and local property taxes average less than \$6,000 per return.

Reducing the cap on the mortgage interest deduction to \$500,000 (\$250,000 single)—This change will increase the cost of homeownership for many middle-class Californians. Given the high cost of housing in the state, mortgages for many mid-level homes are significantly above these caps, particularly the \$250,000 cap for single filers. More than 4 million California tax returns claim the mortgage interest deduction at an average of over \$12,000 per return.

Elimination of the interest exclusion for Private Activity Bonds (PABs)—This will remove an important tool used by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program to construct affordable housing, which was used to fund nearly 20,000 affordable housing units in 2016.

The state's Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (iBank) has issued Private Activity Bonds in support of museums, schools, performing arts centers, charitable organizations and research institutes throughout the state. Elimination of Private Activity Bonds would greatly increase borrowing costs for such borrowers resulting in the delay; downsizing or outright abandonment of these socially beneficial projects and the people and jobs who depend on them.

Further, this would hurt California veterans by ending bond issuances that help around 1,000 veterans buy a home every year. This program has been around since at least World War II. It serves veterans that would not otherwise qualify for private financing, while maintaining foreclosure rates of less than 0.25 percent.

Repeal of Casualty Loss Deduction—Last month's devastating wildfires in northern California have alone caused billions of dollars in losses, with more than 10,000 homes damaged and over 4,700 more destroyed. For this and other disasters to come, it is important to maintain the casualty loss deduction as a way of providing relief to the victims of casualty losses both large and small. The repeal of the casualty loss deduction starting in 2018 under H.R. 1 is an unnecessary step that will only compound the difficulty for the many thousands of Californians who either are or will be struggling to recover from devastating losses.

Negative impacts on Education—Multiple provisions now in H.R. 1 negatively impact the cost of education for both students and educators, including the elimination of the student loan interest deduction, imposing a new tax on tuition waivers, elimination or reduction of various tax credits, and a new tax on net investment income of private colleges and universities if their endowments exceed \$250,000 per full-time student. In total, all of the changes to education provisions will raise taxes on Americans by over \$60 billion over ten years, which indicates a negative impact on California of at least \$7 billion.

Unfavorable treatment of children and families—The new \$300 Family Flexibility Credit for the tax filer, their spouse, and for non-child dependents is temporary and expires in 2023. While it provides a tax benefit for many low-income families in the first four years, its expiration leads to those same families having much smaller net tax cuts or overall tax increases in 2023 and beyond. In addition, unlike the current dependent exemptions it is intended to replace, there is no indexing of the Child Tax Credit, which leads to its positive impact eroding over time.

Also, requiring a Social Security number for the refundable portion of the child tax credit punishes working undocumented immigrants in California who file their tax returns using a Taxpayer Identification Number. More than \$3.4 billion in federal refundable child tax credits were claimed by Californians in 2015, and a portion of those would have been undocumented immigrants filing with a Taxpayer Identification Number.

Overall tax cuts for the wealthy—Lower tax rates on business income will disproportionately benefit higher-income individuals who are more likely to have income from limited liability companies, S corporations, or partnerships. Further, the repeal of the estate tax will disproportionately benefit the wealthy. The estate tax would be fully re-

pealed for deaths after December 31, 2023 and there would be no change to the basis step-up rule that currently revalues appreciated capital assets at market value at the time of death. As a result, wealthy people would be able to simply hold on to assets until they die, pass the assets on to their heirs, and all the increase in the value of the asset during the wealthy person's life will not be taxed. Removing the tax on inherited wealth without also repealing the basis step-up rule leads to increasing inequality. The Joint Committee on Taxation analysis shows that for 2027, the highest-income Americans—less than three-tenths of one percent of taxpayers—will realize almost one-third of the total benefits.

Prioritizes corporations over individuals—The net benefits of H.R. 1 are weighted heavily towards corporations, with the significant cut in the corporate tax rate coupled with the removal of relatively few corporate tax breaks. Instead, many deductions and tax credits taken by lower-and middle income households are either reduced or eliminated. A November 3 Joint Committee on Taxation analysis indicates that more than half of the tax cut goes to corporations while about one-third goes to businesses that pass through income to individuals.

Massive expansion of the deficit by at least \$1.7 trillion over ten years—Deficit-financed tax cuts are not likely to lead to significant growth effects because the negative economic effects of the debt would crowd out investment. Further, fiscal stimulus at this point in the business cycle—with the economy at full employment, corporate profit margins at all-time highs, and corporate cash balances at all-time highs—is unlikely to lead to significant growth above what would have occurred in the absence of these changes.

If you need any additional information on any of these subjects, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL COHEN,
Director.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
November 9, 2017.

Re Tax Reform and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REP. NAPOLITANO: Last week you received a letter from me and other prominent signatories respectfully urging you to preserve the 4 percent Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (4 percent Housing Credit) and Private Activity Bond Program (Bond Program). The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, introduced in the House of Representatives on November 2, proposes the elimination of the Bond Program and the effective elimination of the 4 percent Housing Credit.

I reiterate the vital role these programs play in building and preserving affordable housing throughout the nation, but especially in California where, as you know, we struggle with a housing crisis that is quickly metastasizing into a humanitarian and public health catastrophe. Today, the state's housing shortage stands at one and a half million units and is growing by an alarming 60,000 units each year. The 4 percent Housing Credit and Bond Program are the large sources of funding for affordable housing in California, with \$2.2 billion worth of 4 percent housing credits last year and more than \$6 billion of private activity tax exempt bond funding for multifamily and single-family housing. Together, they created or preserved more than 20,000 affordable homes in 2016, nearly all of which were for low-income

households, including veterans, seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons experiencing homelessness.

The purpose of this letter is to highlight the projects in your district that have received funding from these programs over the last four years. Attached is a spreadsheet with a list of the projects. Any projects listed in red have pending applications, and these projects could be brought to a halt by a sudden cessation of the programs.

As the list of projects shows, this is not an abstract issue, or one that impacts only one region or a small number of Californians. It is broad-based and affects constituents like yours and those in congressional districts across the state. We all have seen the tangible benefits of these vital programs; now we must come together to save them.

I know you will agree with me that we cannot allow even more Californians to be driven into homelessness. That is why I strongly urge you to reject the elimination of the Bond Program and the 4 percent Housing Credit.

Sincerely,

JOHN CHIANG,
California State Treasurer.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP,
Irwindale, CA, November 8, 2017.

Re Concerns with the provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (H.R. 1).

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN NAPOLITANO: On behalf of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, I wish to express concerns with several provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (H.R. 1). While the Partnership has long supported federal tax reform to encourage economic growth and provide tax relief for middle-class and working families, the elimination of several key deductions will have a negative effect here in the San Gabriel Valley.

The elimination of the Private Activity Bonds (PABs) tax exemption will hit municipal governments and non-profit organizations especially hard and would have ripple effects across the healthcare and housing sectors. Many non-profit organizations rely on local governments as partners to issue PABs to obtain cheaper financing for a variety of endeavors like the construction of affordable housing, education programs, and elder care. Although recently state legislation will provide more funding for affordable housing, PABs are the finance backbone for these types of housing projects. PABs funded 20,000 affordable housing units in California last year; it is estimated the federal deduction alone is worth \$2.2 billion in projects throughout the state. Were the exemption to be eliminated for PABs, the result would likely be a 15-20 percent reduction in the overall size of the U.S. municipal bond market.

Additionally, the limitation of the state and local tax deduction (SALT) and the reduction in the mortgage interest deduction will hurt first time home buyers in the San Gabriel Valley as well as Californians in other expensive housing markets in the state, costing them several thousand dollars a year that they could have saved under the existing deductions. One-fifth of all American taxpayers claim the state and local tax deduction. Retaining this deduction is an important way to allow Americans to keep more of their income.

The Partnership is supportive of revising the federal business tax code which has grown outdated and overly burdensome for American companies competing abroad.

Lowering the corporate rate from 35 percent to 20 percent, allowing the repatriation of foreign-made profits, and removing incentives to locate offshore are all positive steps in improving the tax climate for American business. But these positive changes are too costly if the major deductions discussed above are eliminated to pay for these changes. We ask that you work with your colleagues in Congress to keep these deductions intact.

Sincerely,

JEFF ALLRED,
President & CEO.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the resumption of legislative business.

BIG DAY FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, this has been a big day.

There are so many people who have suffered in this country, especially since the passing of ObamaCare. It is difficult to call it the Affordable Care Act. There is a small percentage that supposedly has done better.

Usually, when my friends across the aisle and most of the media talk about how much better off Americans are under ObamaCare, they ignore the real results, and, instead, they point and say: There are so many people—millions of people now—who have insurance now that didn't have it before.

Well, the reason they could say that was because ObamaCare forced people to buy insurance. We went through this with some family members, helping them make the calculation: should they pay the penalty through additional income tax, or should they buy insurance that they will never, ever be able to use?

On some occasions, you are better off paying the extra tax, which means the government wanted your money a lot worse—well, not worse than the individual—but the government has the power to steal from people and call it legal, and then it is legal.

There was a massive amount of legalized stealing under ObamaCare that took place. This bill we passed today would end so much of the stealing from individuals that the government has been doing legally since ObamaCare passed.

□ 1415

But, yes, there will be millions of people, I would suspect, that when we legally end the individual mandate, they are not going to continue to pay for insurance, huge amounts every month that they can't afford—people

making \$25,000, \$30,000, or so, who couldn't afford to pay for health insurance who were required to do that.

Do you want to pay higher income tax? Are you going to pay for health insurance that you are never going to be able to use? The premiums cost you more than you can afford, the deductible is so high. Clearly, you are young. You are never going to use it. The odds are 99.99 percent you will never use it. But the government forced them to pay more taxes or pay more for insurance they couldn't use.

The good news for those people is that now you will be able to—well, once this becomes the law, and it does need to pass the Senate. The Senate has a little different version, and there are a few things in the Senate version I like better than ours, but there are a lot of things in our bill that I like better than the Senate.

If the Senate will go ahead and do their job like they did not do on repealing at least part of ObamaCare, they will do their job on this, the American people are going to benefit. We are going to see the economy take a big jolt forward and upward, more jobs coming to America.

Nobody gets everything they want. I believe what the President really wanted was going to be best for the country. If we could hold to a 15 percent corporate tax, I wanted to see that across the board for S corporations, C corporations. But as the President knew—I know he knew because we talked about it more than once—that 15 percent would undercut the corporate tax that China has. If we undercut the corporate tax that China has, then it means we were going to be getting manufacturing jobs back to America.

We have had so many manufacturing plants pick up and move to other places—mainly China, Mexico, other places. We need to be manufacturing here.

I know there are those elitists who have been educated with degrees far beyond their intellectual capacity to absorb. They got the degrees, but they didn't get the wisdom. And some have ventured to say: No, we don't need to be a manufacturing country. We have evolved above being these lowly manufacturers. That is for developing countries, not a wonderful country like ours is.

Obviously, they spent too much time in other places than studying history. This is something else I have talked about with the President—he knows it just from his business acumen; I know it from studying history—that any nation that is a powerful nation in the world that cannot manufacture the things that that country needs in a time of war will cease to be a great nation after the next war. And be assured, there will be wars.

Jesus, the wisest to ever walk this planet, said there will always be wars and rumors of war. And that is true because this planet has evil: people who will do evil, countries that will do evil,

people who get jealous when some other country has more freedom, more assets. And there is going to be evil in this world as long as this world exists.

We saw that down in Sutherland Springs. Some lunatics—again, many of them educated well beyond their ability to be wise—had popped off and said, well, if prayer worked, those people would never have been shot in a church where they were praying and worshipping.

As long as people are in this world, there is going to be evil—not that God wants evil to prevail. He doesn't. He doesn't want that any should stumble. But as a parent knows, you could force your child to say, "I love you" or to throw their little arms around your neck, hug you, and say, "I love you." You could force them to do that. It doesn't mean a whole lot. But when you give people the free will to choose to love you, to choose to follow your rules, it is overwhelming to a parent when a child freely chooses to do that.

So we have freedom of choice. Some choose to do evil. Some want governments to be all powerful because, in their lack of wisdom, they think that the government needs to be in control of everything and everybody.

The late Justice Scalia, who could make me laugh—he loved good jokes and stories like I do. There have been a lot of unpleasant memories, a lot of unpleasant fights, a lot of fights that I haven't won, but I stood up for what I believed was right.

When I would get around Justice Scalia, having lunch together or breakfast together, we would get to telling stories and jokes, and he was so clever. It was often hard to find a joke or a story he had not heard, but it was just fun to be around him.

But in one of those, I think it was a lunch that time, he said: You know, back when I was working for the Attorney General—and I don't remember which Attorney General it was back in the 1970s—he said: We had a weekly meeting, and one morning the Attorney General came in, and he said: Well, I was at a cocktail party last night, and for the first time I heard a definition that explained the difference between Democrats and Republicans.

He said: I actually think it is pretty good. I think it is very descriptive.

He said: What I learned was Democrats are people who want to control everybody and everything, and Republicans are people who don't want them to.

Well, I found that rather amusing. Actually, that is pretty accurate. Some people on the Republican side of the aisle go: Why don't we plot and plan as well as the Democrats do? They are always trying to figure out how they get power, how they get over on this and that, and we just want people to live and let live. We want as little government as necessary to keep order but allow people to succeed with no ceiling, no limit.

But to succeed, you also have to have the opportunity to fail, just like Edison did. In the hundreds of things he tried, finding a filament, the element that would heat up and not burn in two to make a light bulb, he knew it would work. Somebody asked him about all those failures, and he said, no, each time he tried something that didn't work, it wasn't a failure. He just learned that that is one less thing that might work.

But Fisher, who came up with the space pen—I love those space pens. The email still goes around that says that Americans spent \$4 million to develop a pen that would work in outer space, government money. Russians just use pencils. Not a dime of government money was used.

With an intellect like Fisher, he knew there had to be a way that you could develop a pen that would write in gravity and with no gravity, underwater, above the air—or above the Earth's atmosphere, so he came up with it. But he knew he was going to have to pressurize a pen, and this is such a cartridge.

So he sealed it, put about 30 pounds of pressure. But the trick was finding an ink that didn't explode out when you put 30 pounds of pressure on it or that was not so thick that it wouldn't work when you tried to write. Eventually, he was able to do that.

Lots of failures, but you have got to allow people a chance to fail if they are going to have a chance to succeed. If the government puts its thumb on the scales, it is not real success, it is not real failure, and, eventually, those cards are going to come falling down.

Well, what we have done today with our tax bill, it is a huge step because I know, Mr. Speaker, most folks here are well aware, it is hard to get a majority agreement on much of anything, but we did today. We had a significant majority that agreed. It isn't perfect. Nothing any human ever does will be, but it moves the ball down the road.

One of the things I love about my friend from Texas, KEVIN BRADY, is I would hear from people back home—and talk to KEVIN. He is open to talking not just to Texans. He will talk to everybody. And I found that with so many members on the Ways and Means Committee. My friend DAVID SCHWEIKERT was always available to answer questions, and he was doing his homework thoroughly.

One of the things that has deeply troubled many Americans, and especially seniors, either seniors in poor health or younger Americans who had severe health problems, is, in the ObamaCare bill that was so unaffordable, it changed the deductibility of medical expenses.

Before, it was, if you had medical expenses, you had a really bad time of it, then our hearts go out to you and we want your life to be a little easier when you are going through so much difficulty with bad health, so the deductibles were any medical expense

over 5 percent of your adjusted gross income.

In order to come up with the billions and billions of dollars that ObamaCare, I would submit, wasted, they had to cut out some of the deductions like that, so they ended up raising the threshold from 5 percent to 7½, 10 percent. So it has been 10 percent. You had to have more than 10 percent of your adjusted gross income in order to deduct it, but we still had a lot of, especially, seniors who had more than that.

I had accountants from home send me information about seniors, particularly seniors who had been paying a great deal of medical expense because, no, Medicare didn't take care of them.

And of course we know AARP jumped on the bandwagon for ObamaCare—not because it was going to be good for the seniors. In fact, it was extremely violent to the finances of seniors and to their health, as well. But AARP was more interested in the massive amount of money they could add to their coffers, even though they are considered a nonprofit. So they jumped on board, and, of course, companies that sold other policies had to pay a 2 percent tax on each policy.

AARP got the sweetheart deal. Their policy they embraced didn't have to pay the 2 percent tax. And I haven't seen the provision, but I am told there was a provision that exempted their executive so they didn't have the normal cap on their executive income.

So the people at the top of AARP, they did great. Seniors really got harmed, losing \$716 billion in cuts to Medicare. But for all those seniors who got harmed, couldn't get the surgery, couldn't get the medical help they need, just keep in mind, AARP was able to sell a lot more policies and make a lot more money even though it did a lot of harm to some seniors. Just remember, AARP came out great out of that.

But nonetheless, for those of us who were very sympathetic to seniors having hundreds of billions of dollars cut from Medicare, they heard the President say: Now, this isn't going to affect you seniors at all. It is only going to cut some of the profits from healthcare providers—basically, what was said.

But many of my seniors in east Texas figured out: Wait a minute. If you are not going to pay the healthcare provider for my medicine, for my surgery, for what I need, then I am not going to be able to get the procedure, the surgery, the healthcare that I need if it is not going to be paid for.

So I have had many seniors talk to me about surgeries being delayed or that they couldn't get the same thing they had before ObamaCare passed.

□ 1430

So we haven't repealed ObamaCare, but in this bill, we repealed the ObamaCare mandate, the individual mandate. That means that some people who were forced to pay a higher income tax—they didn't get one of these ridic-

ulous insurance policies—they are going to have that much money in their own pocket. If they were paying for a policy that they knew was never going to help them out, they won't have to buy that.

And, of course, the Democrats, for all the Main Street media, will say, "Oh, look at how many people don't have insurance," when the truth is so many of those people chose not to buy insurance because they knew it was a terrible deal.

I still want to see a reform of healthcare, a real reform of healthcare, but that would mean getting away from either insurance companies or the government being between us and our doctors, our healthcare providers. The way you do that is that you make it so attractive to put money in your own health savings account—and I expect us to pass something to make it much easier and much more attractive. It is not in this bill. This was a tax bill—but I am still hopeful that we are going to do a reform of healthcare and repeal, at least most of ObamaCare. I had that hope. And I hoped that today was a start, not only toward getting tax reform and getting tax relief for Americans and seeing the economy get going again, but also put back in motion true repeal of ObamaCare and getting healthcare laws in place that will be good for Americans.

But how can you have competitive prices in healthcare if nobody knows what these procedures or medicines cost? You see, you get a notice from the healthcare provider—your insurance company—that something costs \$12,000, but you don't know that the insurance company satisfied that \$12,000 payment demand with an \$800 or \$900 payment. But if you knew that if you were paying cash out of your health savings account, a \$12,000 procedure would only cost \$800, you wouldn't be so big on paying \$2,000 a month to a health insurance company.

And these health insurance companies still don't see that, under ObamaCare, their days are numbered. It was designed to fail. And America gets so mad at health insurance companies because it was built into ObamaCare. Not only were they going to have record profits, like some of them did last year, but they were going to get bailouts on top of their record profits.

It was going to make America so mad at the insurance companies that even conservatives would say: Well, I never thought I would say this, but anything has to be better than what we have with these insurance companies. Why don't we have the government just take over everything?

Then, voila, we then have VA healthcare for all Americans, except much worse than the VA provides, because everybody is forced to be in it.

I was amazed, as an exchange student in the Soviet Union, to see the type of medical care that was in the Soviet Union in the seventies. I just thanked

God that we didn't have that kind of socialized medicine, and we were so much more advanced.

But it was clear that physicians, back in the Soviet Union in the seventies—I am sure there were some that were really dedicated, but, for most, it was an 8-to-4, 9-to-5-type job—the fewer people they could see, the better they liked it. But that meant a lot of people waited in long lines, didn't get seen, had to come back and come back, and they didn't get the procedures that they needed.

Or, like in Canada, a fellow, named Tyler, told me that his dad died of a heart attack after he had been on the list to get bypass surgery for 2 years.

I said: Two years? It really took that long?

He said: Well, they kept moving people in front of him.

I said: Well, now wait a minute. I understand it is a crime to pay or do anything to get yourself moved up the list.

He said: Oh, yeah, that is the way I understand it, too. But we had a board that would pick and choose among the American citizens who would go in front, and they kept putting people in front of my dad, who finally had the heart attack and died because the board kept putting people in front of him.

That goes back to what Sarah Palin said. She called it a death panel. She was speaking with hyperbole, but the truth is—whether you want to call it a death panel or not—they were making decisions over who would get what; that would mean they lived or died in some occasions, or it meant whether they were going to live in pain or live in comfort. These were government boards making these decisions, just like they used to do in the Soviet Union before it fell.

So I see this tax bill today as not only a step in the right direction to get people more money in their own pockets they can use to make the economy grow, but I see it also as a step in the right direction toward reforming healthcare again because we eliminate the individual mandate.

I still would like to see these further reforms, like I am talking about. I put in a bill, I filed years ago, that healthcare providers would have to post, at least at their facility, but certainly online, if they were online—and now it ought to be a requirement—post exactly what you charge an individual paying cash, an individual with Blue Cross, or Aetna, or whatever it is. Let people know exactly what things cost. Don't send a \$15,000 bill for going into the hospital that you know you are going to accept \$1,000 as payment in full from an insurance company. If you are going to accept \$1,000 for a \$15,000 bill, then say it costs \$1,000.

If we could require everybody to post exactly what things cost, they wouldn't be in such an all-fired hurry to make sure that they had insurance, other than catastrophic, really catastrophic insurance. Because instead of

paying \$2,000 a month to an insurance company—\$24,000 a year—well, they would be better off paying \$1,500 as payment in full for \$15,000 in charges.

We still have a good ways to go, but you don't get anywhere until you take that first step, and today was a giant step, in my opinion.

I didn't realize, until I saw this notice from the Farm Bureau, but the headline says: "House Poised to Take up Farm Bureau-Supported Tax Bill." It was good to see that.

Another article from Heritage Action: "House tax plan propels reform forward."

FOX News has an article, by Newt Gingrich: "House and Senate tax plans have more in common than you think." That makes some excellent points.

It is good news all the way around. It is a step in the right direction.

I am hopeful that some of the things we disagree on, we are going to be able to work out with the Senate. One of those things, like I mentioned, the Senate, as I understand it, their bill currently has an allowance for deductions of medical expense beyond 10 percent. Hopefully, we can eventually do better than that and get it back from where ObamaCare put it, maybe back to 5 percent, at some point.

But we have seniors on fixed incomes, and Medicare doesn't cover what they are needing in the way of healthcare, and they are being overwhelmed by medical expense. Once again, I think if we can get some reforms in—it doesn't have to be a total reform of healthcare, but just get some things in there—even if we can't get the total repeal because of the Senate's recalcitrance, at least let's get some reforms to get people the help they need.

I would also like to address the issue of the Roy Moore allegations. Having prosecuted sexual assault crimes, I have even been forced against my will—but you get an order, and you follow the order to defend sexual assault crimes—in one case finding that a trumped-up case against my African-American client was totally bogus, trumped-up, and we were able to prove irrefutably as such.

But sexual assault allegations are a very dangerous thing. We have in America what we call statute of limitations on most crimes. The reason we have statute of limitations on most crimes is because if you are going to be accused of something, it needs to be made in a timely manner, so that if you are going to accuse somebody of committing a crime, they have a chance to find witnesses.

One of the very reasons that there are statutes of limitations on crimes like sexual assault is that if you wait 38 years to accuse somebody of a sexual assault, it is almost impossible to prove exactly where you were. And I have heard some people in the Senate say: Oh, well, there are just so much specifics coming out that it just seems irrefutable.

Well, usually people's memories wane over the period of three to four decades on times and exact places. And I know, from my days as a judge, sent many rapists and sexual assaulters to prison for many years, including life, I was particularly hard on people who committed sexual assault crimes because they violate so much more than just a physical violation. It is an abominable crime.

But we have limitations. So if somebody makes an allegation against you that you did such and such at 2 in the afternoon on such and such afternoon, and it was at this particular location, and these people were not around, I mean, if you put a bunch of specifics in there, within a year, then the individual being charged can go back to his calendar, or her calendar, and see: Okay, on that day, oh, I wasn't even in that city, I was over here in this city, I was in court across town, I was not even where that happened. So I can bring in and show—not just raise a reasonable doubt—but show absolutely for sure that never happened. That is why we have limitations.

I would just encourage people that when they hear alleged factual allegations that occurred decades previously, no matter how many specifics are thrown in, reserve judgment, and give it a chance to get all of the facts in.

That is why, in every single case I have tried as a judge—and there were thousands of felony cases that came before my court—but in every single case I tried, after the prosecution finished, I then turned to the defense for their chance to submit evidence. It is why, after every witness testified for the prosecution, I turned to the defense attorney and gave them a chance to cross examine.

And there were times I heard charges that, in my mind, were so outrageous, but I knew we have a system in place to protect innocent people from spurious allegations, and we have to go through the process, including an appeal, after the trial. And I have reviewed many appeals as an appellate chief justice.

You have got to let the process play out. And any time somebody comes running in and wants somebody tried in the court of public opinion, and they are only going to give them 3 or 4 weeks, then immediately that should be suspect. Not that it can't be proved out as true, but it should immediately be suspect because these people tried to game the system. They didn't want to give enough time for the ones allegedly committing an offense to prepare a defense.

□ 1445

They didn't want to give adequate time to investigate, even after 38 years. How do you go back 38 years later and say: Gee, where was I? I don't have a calendar that goes back that far. I don't know if I was in town, if I was out of the country. I don't know where I was. Gee, it seems like around that

time. Maybe I was here or there. I don't know.

The odds of being able to mount a proper defense three or four decades after something allegedly happened is just almost impossible.

So all you can do to defend yourself—and I am speaking hypothetically. If somebody, hypothetically, made outrageous allegations against you, and, you know, I know I never did that, how do I prove it?

Well, you are not going to be able to find witnesses to say where you were at that specific moment in time because you don't even remember where you were. How will you find a witness that will back you up?

And if you do find a witness who can say, "Oh, I remember that very second," 38 years later, "this is where he was," then that witness becomes suspect because you just don't remember like that.

So I hope, Mr. Speaker, that people will allow an election to go forward with the parties the people have chosen and give time for all the facts to come out.

I like Roy Moore, and I appreciate the man of faith that he is. I think the election needs to go forward just as it is. I think we should not intervene in Congress, and we should let the people of Alabama decide, based on proven facts, not on some last-minute attack.

We should give time for all of the facts to come out, not just the facts that have been set up over the last several months, in all likelihood, in preparation for being able to blindside a candidate, so you have all the facts and you can keep slipping stuff out day after day; because it could very well end up just like Ted Stevens' case, where at least one FBI agent and a prosecutor created a case that not only had reasonable doubt about it, but it was absolutely false.

Senator Ted Stevens was not the most lovable guy. He was kind of a crotchety guy when I was around him. It wasn't very often. They accused him of not filing notice about a hundreds-of-thousands-of-dollars gift improvement onto a home he had.

The FBI—at least some in the FBI, as was borne out by the affidavit by an FBI officer who actually had a conscience, not like his superior FBI agent lead investigator. They fabricated evidence. They hid evidence. The evidence that they had gotten when they served warrants, went to his home, took every piece of paper, every bank record, everything he had, computers, all this, raided the bank, got all their information, got any notes and things, he didn't have the evidence to defend himself because the FBI got it all.

A guy named Robert Mueller was the head of the FBI. This was probably the biggest case that went through the FBI while he was Director, at least one of them. He saw to it that the FBI agent that blew the whistle and pointed out that they have evidence that shows that Ted Stevens not only did not get

a free hundreds-of-thousands-of-dollars, \$600,000-, \$700,000-addition to his house, that he paid hundreds of thousands of dollars more than that. Apparently, there was some communication between the contractor and Senator Stevens saying: You are overpaying. Quit overpaying.

Senator Stevens said: No. No. I am strong-willed in the Senate, so I have always got people looking to try to make something up, so I have to overpay.

The man overpaid.

The FBI, under Mueller, fabricated a case. They tried it the week before the election, and there was a reason for that. They tried it the week before the election. They got a conviction. He lost the election, I think it was by 1,200 votes or so.

After he had lost the election, there was no way to rewind that clock. He was out of the Senate. The Democrats got the seat. They sure didn't care that they won the seat based on a lie, a fraudulent case brought by the U.S. Government. They didn't care. They were glad to have the seat.

It is kind of like Senator Harry Reid said after he made false accusations against Mitt Romney that he hadn't paid any taxes, and when he was asked about it later after Mr. Romney lost the election, his response was basically: Well, it worked, didn't it?

He had no remorse for destroying a man's reputation falsely without any evidence or with manufactured evidence, lies. No remorse, just: It worked, because we got the seat.

And I have a feeling that, when the smoke clears and we find all of the evidence that is left after 38 years, we are going to find that there was a problem not as much with Roy Moore as there was with the accusers, but we need to wait and see. Nobody needs to be rushed to trial.

We have a system of government that prevents somebody from being punished by the government, but the fact is the government is being used to try to punish Roy Moore.

Let's say, hypothetically, you were an establishment leader in the Senate and you have been pushing for amnesty. You didn't want illegal immigration stopped, because there are donors that give a lot of money that want illegal immigration to continue. You wanted amnesty, and you know in the Attorney General's Office you have a guy there, regardless of things you disagree on, who has really cracked down on illegal immigration.

You know you have got a guy that just won the primary in a State, and you spent tens of millions of dollars trying to destroy the guy in the primary and it didn't work. He won. So it looks like he is about to win the election, the general election, even though you are in his same party.

I am just thinking hypothetically. Certainly none of this would be true, surely, but, wow, what a great deal if somebody made accusations, true or

not true, against the guy that you tried to destroy with millions of dollars, that, you know, if he is elected, he is going to come in. He is not going to be your best friend because you called him everything in the book; you tried to destroy him.

So, wow, even though he is in your own party, maybe you would be better off if you had a Democrat you feel like you could work with that was more establishment than the guy that you tried to destroy, that, if he would have gotten along with you—probably not now because you went after him so strongly—what if you could have that guy taken out with allegations, whether true or not, and then you could kill a number of birds.

You know that Steve Bannon has said he is going to war after you. Wow. And Bannon went all in to support this guy in his primary and this election, so if his candidate gets destroyed, you have just destroyed his ability to raise money.

And then on top of that, if you could talk the unsuspecting President into talking his Attorney General into leaving that post to try to go to the Senate, wow, you get rid of the guy that has gotten tough on illegal immigration, you get rid of the guy that has been raising money and going against the establishment, and you get rid of the guy that you tried to destroy with tens of millions of dollars even though he was in your own party—I am just saying, hypothetically.

Maybe it would make for a good fiction novel someday, and maybe there is somebody out there writing that novel, but I am just saying, what if. Wow. What a novel piece of fiction that might be some day. Maybe we would see it in a movie someday. Maybe the Senator would even be from the South.

I also know, having been a district judge, I signed everything original. I know there are some judges that don't sign their orders; they just let somebody stamp.

I made clear the day I became a district judge that nobody is stamping my signature on anything; if it is a stamp, it is going to be clear that it is a stamp, that anything that has got to be originally signed, I am going to sign it.

Now, as I understand it, Judge Moore signed things originally, but on other things, on copies—we would put a stamped signature and note that it was a copy. But his, they either stamped or his assistant wrote his signature, and because the assistant's name had initials D.A., put "D.A." out beside his name to denote that he didn't originally sign this. This was the assistant on his behalf. So litigants would normally get a copy and not the original, of course, unless you make multiple originals.

I wondered when I saw in the yearbook the picture of the signature, I thought: DA? I didn't think he was ever a DA.

Well, he wasn't. He was assistant DA. He was a district judge. He was a chief

justice of the supreme court there in Alabama. He was never the DA.

It is interesting, if someone believed that a guy molested their minor daughter and that person later had a divorce pending in that guy's court, I know I would certainly ask for a different court. There is no way I would let a judge who molested my child have any jurisdiction over my divorce. If I had never brought out about the alleged molestation before, I would certainly do it then. People would need to know that the judge in that court, and particularly the judge on my divorce, was a child molester. They would need to know.

If you don't let people know at that point, you are basically an accomplice. You are allowing this assaulter out there to continue whatever he may be doing to others. You need to come forward and report it. It is not a crime not to report it, but it needs to be reported, and certainly if that person goes on the bench.

It must have been quite a realization for Judge Moore when he saw that "D.A." and realized: Somebody has forged what they thought was my signature, when it was really my assistant, and that is why the assistant put "D.A." out there, to denote that I didn't sign that.

Wow. That must have been quite a feeling for the judge.

There is a story from Joel Pollak on November 16, "Gloria Allred's Blunder on Roy Moore's Yearbook Challenge," that talks about that.

There is another story by John Nolte, also November 16, "Journalist Leann Tweeden Accuses Senator Al Franken of Fondling, Kissing Her Without Consent." I don't know where that is going to lead. I don't know whether the same people will demand his ouster or not. Maybe we need to wait and see if the photograph is forged or if it was photoshopped, something like that.

□ 1500

There is just so much going on, but the bottom line is, today, we have taken a big step toward making America great again. It is not the 15 percent tax I had hoped it would be. In fact, people have got to understand that my friend, Steve Moore, who used to be the senior economics editor for The Wall Street Journal, helped President Trump as an economic adviser. Steve told me a number of times that he likes my definition of corporate tax better than any.

But my definition describes what a corporate tax really is, especially the U.S. corporate tax: 35 percent. It is the largest tariff any modern country has ever put on its own goods or services, because, let's face it, when we put a corporate tax on a company, and 35 percent, they are going to have to put that on their products. If they don't collect that tax on top of the cost of the product, they are going to go out of business. That has got to be added to the cost of the goods or services.

When you look at all the businesses and all the huge manufacturing plants in America that have closed down, and you look at what they were doing before they closed down and you deduct that 35 percent corporate tax or, I would submit, tariff, they could have been selling their product competitively not just in America, but probably in places all over the world. Instead of having to close their doors, they could have kept producing and expanding, but for that huge tariff that was put on their own goods.

Most countries are smart enough not to put a tariff on what their own companies make before they ship them out. But we have been doing that.

So why have we been doing that?

Because it was a great way, people in Congress thought, to raise revenue.

You tell people this mean, evil corporation was paying this tax. We really put it over on this corporation. We made them pay all this tax.

No. What you did was add 35 percent to the cost of their products that they had to figure in somehow to cover that, in addition to what it cost to manufacture; and you have made them non-competitive, here or abroad, and that is why they had to close.

That is why I love the idea of either eliminating the tariff or at least getting it down to 15 percent so we undercut the 17 or so percent that China has. If we undercut their tariff on their own goods, goods produced in China, then those manufacturers are coming back.

I have been amazed that reporters have asked, when I would talk about this publicly: But how are you going to make up for all of that lost income?

They didn't understand, yeah, you are not collecting it as corporate tax, but now you are collecting directly from the people. So it is not a hidden, insidious tax. There are more jobs, and they are paying more money, and the economy is growing and hiring more people. There are more jobs, more income, and more income tax, and it is better for everybody.

But the forces of greed around this country and around this town like to try to convince people they are really sticking it to somebody else, when the truth is that the individuals are going to end up paying it, wherever it is, or the company is not going to stay in business. I would rather them stay in business, add jobs, and give raises.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Faso). The gentleman from Texas has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. So in the last 10 minutes I have here, this will be the last session before Thanksgiving Day. I am greatly disturbed that we have so many young people in America who can't explain what Thanksgiving Day is, why it was originally started, who thanks was given to. Many thought it was to the Indians, but it was not.

This is a declaration, May 2, 1778, to troops at Valley Forge: "The Com-

mander in Chief directs that divine service be performed ever Sunday at 11 o'clock in those brigade to which there are chaplains—those which have none to attend the places of worship nearest to them. It is expected that officers of all ranks will, by their attendance, set an example to their men.

"While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of patriot, it should be our highest glory to laud the more distinguished character of Muslim"—I am sorry. It says, "Christian."

George Washington said that the highest glory of a patriot soldier would be the more distinguished character of a Christian. It was an order he gave.

So I know people are saying this is totally appropriate now, and they wonder why evil seems to keep growing in America. But as we look where we came from and we look at what prior leaders did to defeat the forces of evil that are here in this world—and will be as long as it is here in this form—it seems like there is a correlation between when the country is praying to God and asking for his protection and blessing, and when evil seems to be growing.

Thomas Jefferson, in 1781, noted, and it is engraved in his memorial: "The God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God, that they are not to be violated but with his wrath?"

"Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever."

That is Thomas Jefferson.

John Quincy Adams, on September 26, 1810, wrote a letter to his son, the U.S. Minister at Saint Petersburg: "So great is my veneration for the Bible, and so strong my belief that, when duly read and meditated on, it is of all books in the world that which contributes most to make men good, wise, and happy."

Former President nominated Supreme Court by James Madison, and this on March 30, 1863, by Abraham Lincoln, a great Republican. Lincoln said: "It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are only blessed whose God is the Lord."

This is Lincoln's written word: "We have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us. And we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were

produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us.

"It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

That was a national proclamation by Abraham Lincoln. Thank God that a majority of Americans participated in that and prayed to God.

In his second inaugural, he is talking about North and South. It is inscribed on the inside north wall of the Lincoln Memorial. About half to two-thirds of the way through there, in the middle, he is talking about North and South. He said: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offenses. . . . Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said 3,000 years ago, so still it must be said 'the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

I want to finish with this from John F. Kennedy. He was talking at the lighting of the Christmas tree; but at a time of Thanksgiving, it is certainly appropriate. He said: "With the lighting of this tree, which is an old ceremony in Washington and one which has been among the most important responsibilities of a good many Presidents of the United States, we initiate, in a formal way, the Christmas season. We mark the festival of Christmas, which is the most sacred and hopeful day in our civilization.

"For nearly 2,000 years, the message of Christmas, the message of peace and good will towards all men, has been the guiding star of our endeavors.

"This morning, I had a meeting at the White House, which included some of our representatives from far-off countries in Africa and Asia. They were returning to their posts for the Christmas holidays. Talking with them, I was struck by the fact that, in the far-off continents, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, as well as Christians, pause from their labors on the 25th day of December to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace.

"There could be no more striking proof that Christmas is truly the universal holiday of men. It is the day when all of us dedicate our thoughts to others; when all are reminded that mercy and compassion are the enduring virtues; when all show, by small deeds and large, and by acts, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is the day when we remind ourselves that man can and must live in peace with his neighbors, and it is the peacemakers who are truly blessed.

"In this year of 1962, we greet each other at Christmas with some special sense of blessing of the peace."

Mr. Speaker, this period of Thanksgiving that we will have in the next week will, hopefully, be a time when we will come back together more as a nation; when we will bind our hearts in prayer and Thanksgiving and ask for God's protection, as our greatest Presidents did. And I know those prayers will be answered.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward a sitting Senator.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2810) "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes."

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on November 15, 2017, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 1679. To ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, November 17, 2017, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3181. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Office of Thrift Supervision Regulations received November 15, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3182. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Disability Rights Office, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communica-

tions Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Access to Telecommunication Equipment and Services by Persons with Disabilities [CG Docket No.: 13-46]; Amendment of the Commission's Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets [WT Docket No.: 07-250]; Comment Sought on 2010 Review of Hearing Aid Compatibility Regulations [WT Docket No.: 10-254] received November 15, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3183. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism [CC Docket No.: 02-6] received November 15, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3184. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No. 17-51, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3185. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No. 17-67, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3186. A letter from the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's Semiannual Report to Congress prepared by the Office of Inspector General for the Board and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for the six-month period ending September 30, 2017, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3187. A letter from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's semiannual report covering the period of April 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3188. A letter from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Farm Credit Administration Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2017, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3189. A letter from the Board Chairman, Audit Committee Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's consolidated report to the President, pursuant to the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act and the Inspector General Act of 1978; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3190. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the 30th Annual Report of Accomplishment under the Airport Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2014-2016, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 47131(a); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e) (as amended by Public Law 112-95, Sec. 152(c)); (126 Stat. 34); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2907. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to develop and publish an all-of-the-above quadrennial Federal onshore energy production strategy to meet domestic energy needs, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-413). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2706. A bill to provide requirements for the appropriate Federal banking agencies when requesting or ordering a depository institution to terminate a specific customer account, to provide for additional requirements related to subpoenas issued under the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115-414). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOWDY: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 4182. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify probationary periods with respect to positions within the competitive service and the Senior Executive Service, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-415). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SABLON, Mr. BERA, and Mr. DOGGETT):

H.R. 4416. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to remove barriers for students seeking Federal financial aid by reducing the complexity and length of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and increasing support for working students and vulnerable populations; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 4417. A bill to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 4418. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a demonstration program to facilitate the clinical adoption of pregnancy intention screening initiatives by health care providers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4419. A bill to facilitate and streamline the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Indian Affairs processes for creating or expanding certain water projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. HOYER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. McEACHIN, Mr. CUM-

MINGS, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. RASKIN, and Mrs. COMSTOCK):

H.R. 4420. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to address critical conservation conditions under the regional conservation partnership program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. DESAULNIER (for himself, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. SMUCKER):

H.R. 4421. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to vehicle weight limitations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 4422. A bill to amend section 1951 of title 18, United States Code (commonly known as the Hobbs Act), and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. HENSARLING):

H.R. 4423. A bill to limit claims under Federal law seeking judicial review of any environmental impact statement, environmental review, or authorization for the Lower Bois d'Arc Creek Reservoir Project in Fannin County, Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. CRIST):

H.R. 4424. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exclusion from gross income for interest on certain small business loans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 4425. A bill to reform the safety net for farmers and ranchers, enhance soil, water, and habitat conservation, encourage beginning farmers and ranchers, strengthen nutrition for Americans, support agriculture research and innovation, reduce food waste, improve animal welfare, and invest in regional food systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Education and the Workforce, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEYER, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BARRAGAN, Ms. LEE, Mr. McEACHIN, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD):

H.R. 4426. A bill to reform Federal onshore and offshore fossil fuel leasing, exploration, and development; promote renewable energy on public lands; prepare for the impacts of climate change; increase industry accountability; improve returns to taxpayers for the development of Federal energy resources; and protect special places, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, Agriculture, Education and the Workforce, Ways and Means, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia):

H.R. 4427. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the diversity immigrant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GALLEGO (for himself and Mr. BYRNE):

H.R. 4428. A bill to amend the War Powers Resolution to transfer to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives the responsibilities assigned under such Resolution to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BERGMAN (for himself, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. UPTON):

H.R. 4429. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to reissue a rule relating to extension of the expiration dates for double-crested cormorant depredation orders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 4430. A bill to provide temporary direct hire authority for certain emergency response positions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. MEADOWS, Mrs. HANDEL, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. GOMEZ, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4431. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for interest payments by agencies in the case of administrative error in processing certain annuity deposits for prior military service; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 4432. A bill to amend section 1018 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 to make violators of such section liable to residents and invitees of target housing for such violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CORREA (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 4433. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to achieve security of sensitive assets among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. CUELLAR (for himself, Mr. CULBERSON, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. AGUILAR):

H.R. 4434. A bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FASO (for himself, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. KATKO, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. KILDEE):

H.R. 4435. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award Early College Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 4436. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Caguana Indigenous Ceremonial Park and Tibes Indigenous Ceremonial Center, as units of the National Park System; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Ms. MCSALLY):

H.R. 4437. A bill to amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to prohibit the payment of back pay and allowances to certain members of the Armed Forces who are guilty of desertion and to use the amount of any such unpaid pay and allowances to provide additional compensation to other members of the Armed Forces who were killed or wounded during missions to search for the missing members; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana (for himself, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. MCCAUL, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. CRIST, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 4438. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to waive a prohibition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4439. A bill to amend the Revised Statutes, the Bank Service Company Act, the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, and the Home Owners' Loan Act to clarify that the role of the insured depository institution as lender and the location of an insured depository institution under applicable law are not affected by any contract between the institution and a third party service provider, and to clarify that Federal preemption of State usury laws applies to any loan to which an insured depository institution is the party to which the debt is initially owed according to its terms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4440. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to retain and redistribute certain amounts collected as fines; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4441. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to prohibit certain waivers and exemptions from emergency preparedness and response and security regulations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4442. A bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to authorize the Secretary of Energy to enter into contracts for the storage of certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, take title to certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, and make certain expenditures from the Nuclear Waste Fund; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. COLE, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MOORE,

Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 4443. A bill to extend the full Federal medical assistance percentage to Urban Indian organizations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NEAL (for himself, Mr. LEVIN,

Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. VELA, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SABLON, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. NOLAN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 4444. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund, to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4445. A bill to require air carriers to create and make available a concise document regarding air passenger rights; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 4446. A bill to amend the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission Act to extend the expiration date of the Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 4447. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to make certain changes to the reporting requirement of certain service providers regarding child sexual exploitation visual depictions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4448. A bill to provide for an exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 4449. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 200 West 2nd Street in Dayton, Ohio, as the "Walter H. Rice Federal Building and United States Courthouse"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. VEASEY (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. COOK, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 4450. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide additional educational assistance under the Post-9/11 GI Bill for veterans pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering, or math; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WENSTRUP (for himself and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H.R. 4451. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration

programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HULTGREN (for himself, Mr. BUDD, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mr. BABIN):

H.J. Res. 121. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to parental rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania (for himself and Ms. NORTON):

H. Res. 625. A resolution supporting the goals, activities, and ideals of Prematurity Awareness Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BROWN of Maryland:

H. Res. 626. A resolution commending Turkish Americans nationwide for their rich contributions to the diversity of society, culture, economy, and civic life in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself, Mr. KIND, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. WELCH):

H. Res. 627. A resolution recognizing that access to hospitals and other health care providers for patients in rural areas of the United States is essential to the survival and success of communities in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H. Res. 628. A resolution recognizing the Transgender Day of Remembrance; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MENG:

H. Res. 629. A resolution recognizing November 19, 2017 as "A Day in Honor of Women Entrepreneurs"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER:

H.R. 4416.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States..."

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 4417.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 4418.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.R. 4419.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 4420.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 4421.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 4422.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4423.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BLUM:

H.R. 4424.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 4425.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4426.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Cont. art. IV, sec. 3, cl. 2, sen. a

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rule and Regulations respecting the Territory of other Property belonging to the United States;

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 4427.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4: The Congress shall have Power To . . . establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization

By Mr. GALLEG0:

H.R. 4428.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 4429.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—Congress shall have Power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this constitution in the government of the United State, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 4430.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 4431.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

"The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the

United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution."

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4432.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. CORREA:

H.R. 4433.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(1) The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. CUELLAR:

H.R. 4434.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. FASO:

H.R. 4435.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 4436.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 1 of the Constitution of the United States of America All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 4437.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 14 gives Congress the authority to "make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces"

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 4438.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18. To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH:

H.R. 4439.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One of the United States Constitution, section 8, clause 18:

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4440.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4441.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 4442.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 4443.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Mr. NEAL:

H.R. 4444.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is in the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes as enumerated in Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4445.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, United States Constitution.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 4446.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article IV Section 3, Congress shall have Power to dispose and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 4447.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4448.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 4449.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States); Clause 7 (relating to Post Offices and post Roads); and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

United States Constitution, Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. VEASEY:

H.R. 4450.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Title 38, United States Code

By Mr. WENSTRUP:

H.R. 4451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 12, 13, 14, and 18 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.J. Res. 121.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V. "The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution . . ."

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 113: Mr. HIMES, Mr. BERA, and Mr. CLYBURN.
 H.R. 158: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 216: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 233: Mr. NORCROSS.
 H.R. 377: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 398: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 525: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 547: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 548: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 619: Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 620: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
 H.R. 846: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 947: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 993: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.
 H.R. 1120: Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H.R. 1153: Mr. NORMAN.
 H.R. 1155: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 1164: Ms. MENG.
 H.R. 1178: Mr. JONES, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 1192: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 1246: Ms. PLASKETT.
 H.R. 1328: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 1357: Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 1377: Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H.R. 1444: Mr. BABIN.
 H.R. 1472: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 1474: Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 1496: Mr. MCCARTHY.
 H.R. 1498: Mr. DESAULNIER.
 H.R. 1515: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.R. 1676: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
 H.R. 1681: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 1889: Mr. COURTNEY.
 H.R. 1903: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 1912: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 1957: Mr. LANGEVIN and Mr. LEVIN.
 H.R. 1987: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
 H.R. 2095: Mr. SCHIFF.
 H.R. 2119: Miss RICE of New York.
 H.R. 2147: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
 H.R. 2152: Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BUCK, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. CHABOT, and Mrs. HANDEL.
 H.R. 2234: Mr. YARMUTH and Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 2259: Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 2315: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BLUM, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. MULLIN.
 H.R. 2412: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 2452: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 2475: Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. AGUILAR, and Ms. ROSEN.
 H.R. 2477: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 2482: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. PALAZZO.
 H.R. 2514: Mr. BARR, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 2575: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. HIGGINS of New York.
 H.R. 2633: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 2644: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 2653: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 2687: Ms. KAPTUR.
 H.R. 2709: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 2740: Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. TITUS, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr.

SIRES, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. VALADAO.
 H.R. 2926: Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 2938: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 2942: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 2972: Mr. CARBAJAL.
 H.R. 2973: Mr. BABIN and Ms. GABBARD.
 H.R. 3034: Mr. KATKO and Mr. ALLEN.
 H.R. 3079: Mrs. DINGELL.
 H.R. 3174: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
 H.R. 3222: Mr. SCHIFF.
 H.R. 3238: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 3299: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.
 H.R. 3302: Mr. VISCLOSKEY and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 3316: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H.R. 3327: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 3349: Mr. NORCROSS.
 H.R. 3397: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H.R. 3401: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
 H.R. 3444: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 3447: Mr. PAULSEN.
 H.R. 3464: Mr. EVANS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SPIER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 3497: Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 3510: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas.
 H.R. 3513: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 3530: Mr. TONKO and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 3541: Mr. DEUTCH.
 H.R. 3550: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 3635: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
 H.R. 3637: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H.R. 3692: Mr. COLLINS of New York and Mr. KENNEDY.
 H.R. 3759: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. HECK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. HIMES.
 H.R. 3760: Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 3773: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. YARMUTH.
 H.R. 3790: Mr. BUDD and Mr. ALLEN.
 H.R. 3792: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. FASO.
 H.R. 3798: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
 H.R. 3848: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 3871: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 3906: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 3918: Mr. CRIST.
 H.R. 3978: Mr. NORMAN and Mr. PEARCE.
 H.R. 3988: Mr. HUIZENGA.
 H.R. 3994: Mr. WELCH, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 4007: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H.R. 4013: Mr. SABLAN and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H.R. 4022: Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TROTT, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
 H.R. 4058: Mr. NUNES, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. KIND, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. ESTES of Kansas, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. WOMACK.
 H.R. 4059: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.

H.R. 4077: Mr. REED, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. COSTA, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
 H.R. 4082: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. SCHIFF.
 H.R. 4099: Mr. POLIS, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
 H.R. 4101: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. WALBERG, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
 H.R. 4131: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 4172: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 4186: Mr. PALLONE and Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 4202: Ms. TITUS and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
 H.R. 4207: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
 H.R. 4222: Mr. POLIS, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. PALLONE.
 H.R. 4237: Mr. GAETZ.
 H.R. 4253: Mr. DESAULNIER.
 H.R. 4254: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H.R. 4258: Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 4272: Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 4274: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DAVIDSON, and Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 4279: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 4306: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. PANETTA.
 H.R. 4311: Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 4320: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4321: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4327: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
 H.R. 4340: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama and Mr. GARRETT.
 H.R. 4384: Mr. CONYERS and Mrs. LOVE.
 H.R. 4392: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. KING of New York.
 H.R. 4398: Mr. NADLER, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. JAYAPAL.
 H.R. 4413: Mr. NORMAN.
 H.J. Res. 2: Mr. MAST and Mr. ARRINGTON.
 H.J. Res. 31: Mr. GALLEGO, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CRIST, and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
 H.J. Res. 120: Mr. EVANS.
 H. Con. Res. 63: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H. Con. Res. 72: Mr. ROYCE of California and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H. Con. Res. 91: Mr. COHEN.
 H. Res. 58: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
 H. Res. 367: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H. Res. 428: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H. Res. 466: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. DELANEY.
 H. Res. 495: Mr. MOULTON.
 H. Res. 570: Mr. HOLDING.
 H. Res. 576: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
 H. Res. 603: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. LATTA, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
 H. Res. 604: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. FASO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. SIMPSON.
 H. Res. 614: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H. Res. 620: Mr. ENGEL.



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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable LUTHER STRANGE, a Senator from the State of Alabama.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Adrian Brooks, senior pastor at Memorial Baptist Church in Evansville, IN.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, we first thank You for another day of life. We thank You for another chance to bring joy and opportunity to someone else's journey. Lord, guide these public servants within the United States Senate. Please lead them as they lead us to a better and more peaceful landscape. Create, O God, within all of us, the zeal to make our communities around this country more stable. Remove from us any personal animosity that might prevent us from acting as my brother and sister's keeper. We ask Your healing on those Members of this legislative body who are injured or sick.

We ask, O Lord, that You would extend comfort and peace to those families who have been affected by the tragedy in Sutherland Springs, TX. Even in the midst of this tragedy, we thank You, O God, that those 26 fellow sojourners are in Your loving presence, a celestial place where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary always find rest.

Lord, bless our President. Give him, O God, the wisdom and insight to move us toward a more unified and loving Union. May we become, O God, more united in the things that bring us together and reject the smaller things that drive us apart. Help us to catch the spirit of those who wrote the Declaration of Independence. They knew then, and we know now, that this was something splendid and august and powerful.

O God, You have brought us to this critical moment. Let us not lean on our own understanding, but help us, O God, to let Your Spirit take the reins of our hearts and minds. Make us more innovative and less reactive. Let the creative genius that is part of the American fabric take over the urban and rural American landscape. We pray now, O God, that the diversity and inclusion of people and ideas become our strength and not our wedge.

Now, Lord, help us to live by our faith and not by our fears. Help us to face the future with a trust in You and confidence in America's bright, glad tomorrow. Lord, we know that if we trust You, our best days as a nation are waiting on us.

It is in Your powerful and majestic Name that we pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 16, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable LUTHER STRANGE, a Senator from the State of Alabama, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. STRANGE thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

TAX REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, during the past decade, many in the middle class struggled to make ends meet. The economy was sluggish, paychecks were often stagnant, and jobs for many were too hard to find—perhaps not on the coasts, where the well-to-do were able to flourish under the Obama economy—but in middle America, in States like Kentucky, the pain was real.

Hard-working families across the country deserved better. They continue to deserve an economy that reaches for its true potential, one in which more Americans can find a good job to support their families and achieve the American dream.

So now this is our chance to set a new course. This is our opportunity to jump-start the economy and boost job growth. Passing tax reform is the single most important thing we can do right now to support those left behind by the Obama economy.

Though obvious, it is worth repeating: Our Nation's Tax Code is broken. First, the rates are too high. Americans are sending too much of their hard-earned money to Uncle Sam. Second, the structure is too complicated for most Americans to understand, and it is too easy for the wealthy and well-connected to exploit. Third, the incentives are often outdated or simply make no sense at all—like those that actually encourage American jobs and companies to move overseas. That is bad for our country, bad for the middle class, and bad for small business.

In my home State of Kentucky, a small business CEO wrote a column in a publication about her experiences with our broken tax system, calling for

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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tax reform to fix it. Here is what she said:

The federal government takes too much. Our small businesses—which according to the U.S. Small Business Administration total 96.5 percent of Kentucky's employers—often face the greatest tax burden.

This Kentuckian continued:

If we want better lives for the nearly 700,000 employees across the [C]ommonwealth who work for small enterprises, we must lift this weight off their backs.

Small businesses deserve a tax code that works for them. Middle-class families and individuals deserve the same. That is why we are working so hard to enact tax reform. Over in the Senate Finance Committee, Chairman HATCH has laid down a tax reform proposal that is premised on a single idea; that we should take more money out of Washington's pockets and put more money in the pockets of the middle class.

It cuts taxes for middle-class families. It doubles the child tax credit. This plan does a lot of things, including providing relief for businesses so they can create more jobs here in America and then keep them here. The Nation's leading small business advocacy organization endorsed this legislation, saying that it "will provide much needed tax relief to enable small businesses to grow and create jobs."

There is another important provision of the Finance Committee's tax reform proposal as well. It will deliver relief to low- and moderate-income families by repealing ObamaCare's individual mandate tax. In other words, we can deliver even more relief to the middle class by repealing an unpopular tax from an unworkable law. It just makes sense.

I would like to once again thank Chairman HATCH for his commitment to an open process and regular order. The Finance Committee will report a bill soon. Before it does, however, it will continue to consider a number of amendments from both sides of the aisle. In fact, the chairman's modified mark already incorporated amendments from both Republican and Democratic members of the committee.

I look forward to the Finance Committee completing its work on this crucial legislation very soon. As it does, our colleagues in the House will continue working on their own tax reform legislation. I commend Chairman BRADY and the members of the Ways and Means Committee for their efforts. I look forward to the full House passing their bill.

Once both Chambers pass their tax reform bills, we will keep working together to get a bill to President Trump's desk for his signature.

I am also grateful to Chairman MURKOWSKI and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for reporting bipartisan legislation yesterday to secure our Nation's energy future. By further exploring the responsible development of Alaska's re-

sources, this bill can help grow our economy, support high-paying jobs, and strengthen our national security. I look forward to promoting American energy independence through this legislation.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. On another matter, today, the Senate will continue to fulfill its important responsibility of providing advice and consent on President Trump's nominations. So far this week, we have confirmed talented individuals to important positions in the Departments of Transportation, Labor, and Defense.

Yesterday, the Senate advanced the nomination of Joseph Otting to serve as Comptroller of the Currency. Mr. Otting's experience as a leader in various financial agencies has helped prepare him to serve in this new role. I look forward to voting to confirm him later today.

Next, the Senate will consider two well-qualified nominees to serve on Federal district courts. Donald Coggins and Dabney Friedrich both have the experience and temperament to excel as judges. Both of these individuals have stellar legal credentials. Their careers demonstrate a serious commitment to the law, and by confirming them both, the Senate will continue to ensure the Federal judiciary fulfills its particular role in our constitutional system.

I would like to thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his leadership of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which reported both of these nominees on a voice vote. I look forward to advancing their nominations very soon.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Otting nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Joseph Otting, of Nevada, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of five years.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

AMENDING THE FEDERAL FOOD, DRUG, AND COSMETIC ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous

consent that, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4374, which was received from the House. I further ask consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; further, that at a time to be determined between the majority leader and the Democratic leader, the Chair lay before the Senate the conference report to accompany H.R. 2810, and the Senate vote on the adoption of the conference report with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4374) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize additional emergency uses for medical products to reduce deaths and severity of injuries caused by agents of war, and for other purposes, was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDER—Continued

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as the Senate Finance Committee continues to mark up the Senate Republican tax bill, the House will take a vote this afternoon on their version of the bill.

There are plenty of reasons for House Republicans to vote against this bill. For those who care about deficits, you should vote no because the bill increases deficits by over \$1.5 trillion, likely more. Any deficit hawk should be against this increase.

Any defense hawk should be wary of this bill for the same reason. High deficits make it harder to fund important priorities like the military. This morning, three former Defense Secretaries—Leon Panetta, Chuck Hagel, and Ash Carter—penned a letter warning that the Republican tax plan could result, in their words, in a "hollowed-out military force" wracked by cuts to training, maintenance, flight missions, and other vital military programs.

I spoke to General Mattis yesterday. He is definitely afraid of a CR because a CR is at sequestration levels. If we pass this tax bill with its huge deficit, we will have no choice but to go back to sequestration, and the fears of our defense leaders that they cannot fund the military adequately will be very real. So my shout-out is to all of those who care about defense, particularly our defense hawks: If you vote for this bill, you are going to be voting for a "hollowed out military force," as three former defense secretaries have written to us this morning.

For those House Republicans who represent middle and upper class suburban districts, you should vote no because this bill will raise taxes on a

high number of your constituents. Members of Congress from New York, New Jersey, Washington, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Virginia know that State and local deductibility is crucial to working families in their districts. Today, House Republicans in many districts will take a vote to raise taxes on their constituents. And the compromise—the first three-quarters of the break is rescinded even with the compromise over in the House, but, second, the Senate, so desperate for money, has not even included the compromise here. You can be sure when it comes back, that compromise will not be in the bill—certainly not as generous as it is now. It was not very generous to begin with.

According to the New York Times, the House bill would raise taxes on a third of middle-class taxpayers next year and almost half by 2027. The rich, meanwhile, will do just fine.

The Senate bill, similarly, would raise taxes on 20 million middle-class Americans by 2027. Meanwhile, folks making over \$1 million will get an average cut of \$50,000. People say: Well, they have more money; they should get a bigger tax cut. No. The wealthy are doing great. They don't need any tax cut. Give the money to the middle class.

The number of middle-class families who would lose money from this bill may even be higher now, considering the 10-percent increase in premiums that will occur as a result of the Republican plan to repeal the individual mandate. That 10-percent increase in health premiums could more than wipe out the tax cuts received by some folks in the middle. All the while, 13 million fewer Americans get health insurance.

My friend, Senator GRAHAM, recently said: "I hope every Republican knows that when you pass a repeal of the individual mandate . . . [healthcare] becomes your problem." LINDSEY GRAHAM is very politically pressured. He is telling his Republican colleagues that if they do this, every problem in healthcare will be on their backs.

The whole idea of taking money from the pockets of hard-working Americans, of taking money out of their healthcare and giving it to big corporations and those at the very top is so backward, so wrong, that the American people will reject it, and the blame will fall on Republican shoulders. If the Republican tax bill should pass, it would make our economy, so unfairly tilted toward the top as it already is, even more unbalanced and unfair.

Over the past three decades, as technology has changed our economy and our world has become ever more interdependent, our economy has grown. Yes, it has grown; there is a lot of growth. But that growth, more than at any time in history, has been captured entirely, almost, by big corporations and the top 1 percent and particularly the top 0.1 percent of our country. We don't begrudge them. We are glad people work hard. With new ideas and hard

work, people should become wealthy, but they don't need a tax break.

At the same time, middle-class families have muddled along. Median income has barely nudged up in three decades. The costs of college, healthcare, prescription drugs, cable, and the internet have skyrocketed as corporations have consolidated in their industries, reducing competition and driving up prices.

For the middle-class families in the suburbs, for the working parent in the city, for the young millennials just setting off into the workforce after college, for the single mom raising two children, it is about as hard as ever to balance your income with ever-rising costs. In such an economy, tax reform could really matter to those folks, but only if it is done right.

Instead of focusing all their efforts on improving the condition of those working Americans, Republicans have directed the lion's share of the benefits to the already wealthy, the already powerful—corporate America and the very rich.

There is perhaps no better example than President Trump and his family, for whom this bill would be an express mail gift from Heaven: Repealing the estate tax, they have a big one; repealing the alternative minimum tax—the Trumps pay a lot of alternative minimum tax; dropping the rate on pass-through entities like the Trump Organization, a huge tax break for Donald Trump.

So scrapping middle-class deductions while maintaining loopholes for real estate businesses, golf course owners—who do you think came up with this plan? Not the average middle-class guy or gal. All of these things contained in the House Republican bill would likely pile more on top of President Trump's fortune while millions and millions of middle-class families end up paying more.

I am not sure any family in America feels it is right to subsidize tax cuts for folks like President Trump and his family, and their voices will be heard during the debate on this bill and afterward.

This bill will be a huge burden for Republicans to carry on their backs over the next year, make no mistake about it. So we hope they will vote down the bill in the House and in the Senate. I want to assure my friends in the Senate on the other side of the aisle that if the bill goes down, Democrats are ready, willing, able, and eager to work with Republicans on a bipartisan reform.

DACA

Mr. President, before I yield the floor, seeing my friend Senator DURBIN here, I would like to address one final issue—the Dreamers.

My dear friend Senator DURBIN has an uncommon eloquence. He speaks with eloquence and yet with Midwestern common sense. He speaks with persuasiveness and ease on a great number of subjects. He is a great asset

to our Democratic caucus and to the Senate as a whole, but there is no doubt that the Dreamers are at the top of his list. They are near and dear to his heart. He is one of the chief architects of DACA and has labored on their behalf for as long as I can remember.

Every Dreamer should thank Senator DURBIN. He is their sponsor, their champion, and their staunchest advocate.

This morning I would like to join him in recognizing the contributions of a Dreamer in my State—a reminder of the glaring need to pass the Dream Act, since President Trump so misguidedly terminated the program a few months ago.

Zuleima Dominguez is a DACA recipient who lives in the Bronx. Zuleima was brought to the United States from Mexico when she was 7 years old. She has grown up in the United States and has gone to school here; she went to her first dance in the United States and knows no other country as her home.

Like so many other Americans, Zuleima is working her way through college—Hunter College, part of City University on the Upper East Side—but because of her legal status, she has been unable to access enough help to afford her tuition. So what does Zuleima do? She works 45 hours a week at a homeless shelter, giving back to her fellow New Yorkers while saving up for her next semester.

She is studying to be a social worker. Isn't Zuleima what we hope an American citizen would be like? Wouldn't we all be proud to call her our neighbor, our friend, our daughter?

She is someone who works hard and feels a calling to give back to her community. Zuleima has the quintessential American spirit, as had millions who came to this country before her, through the centuries.

She is part of that long and grand tradition of immigration in this country, of folks coming from all over the world to find a better life here, build strong families and communities, and make indelible contributions to our society, our economy, and our culture.

Zuleima and her two children are part of that American tradition. They, with all of us, are what makes America great.

There are many more Dreamers just like Zuleima who came to this country through no fault of their own as very young kids. They study at our schools; they work in our companies; they serve in our military. They are American in every single way but one—their paperwork.

We must fix that now and forever by passing the Dream Act through Congress and giving folks like Zuleima and her kids a chance to live and thrive in the only country they have ever known.

I know my entire caucus supports the bill. I know how many of my friends on the other side of the aisle support it as well. So what are we waiting for? Let's put the bill on the floor and pass it.

I yield to my friend and colleague from Illinois, Senator DURBIN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank the Democratic leader. His strong support of the Dream Act encourages me but, more importantly, gives hope to the Dreamers across America: young men and women, just like the one he described, who are living in fear, fear that their time in America is coming to an end.

This is the only country they have ever known. They have stood in classroom after classroom and pledged allegiance to the American flag, the only flag they have ever known. They sing the national anthem. They believe they are part of America, but as Senator SCHUMER has reminded us, they are missing the paperwork. Their parents brought them here as infants, toddlers, children and never filed the paperwork, never made them legal, and here they are in this country, searching for an answer, searching for some hope.

My best basic question to the U.S. Senate and to my colleagues is: Why do we make this so hard? Why is this so difficult? Don't we all fundamentally agree on the premise that no young person should be held responsible for the actions or decisions of their parents? That is what is happening here. These young people didn't make the key decisions in their lives; their parents did.

Let me quickly add, because many of the Dreamers say: Senator DURBIN, understand that our parents were doing everything they could to help us. I couldn't agree more. From a moral viewpoint, their parents were determined to help their children and were prepared to incur great risk, even legal risk, to do it. I understand that. I would do the same thing, and I am not being critical or negative. But the simple fact and reality is that these young people, because they don't have the paperwork, don't have a future in America.

The circumstances they face are bleak. Imagine, if you will, the challenge of college, the challenge of going from high school on to an education at a university, with no help whatsoever from the Federal Government. You don't qualify for a penny in Pell grants; you don't qualify for any help when it comes to government loans. Think about the challenge of college and higher education without that help, without the fundamental assistance that millions of young Americans count on. Dreamers get no help—none. They have to fight their way forward on their own, and they do it in remarkable and heroic ways.

Over the last break, I was down at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale—deep southern Illinois, 300 miles or more away from the city of Chicago—and I sat down with a group of these Dreamers who were at the university. One young woman had worked so hard to get through community col-

lege and now through the university at Carbondale and still had two semesters left before graduation. She was telling me about her struggles—taking time off to work a job, save the money, go back to school, and here she was where she could see the finish line. As she sat there and described it to me, she stopped and broke down in tears. She said to me: Why am I doing this? Because of the announcement by President Trump, I don't have any future in this country. After all these years and all this effort, I really don't have a future here.

I don't believe that, and I begged her not to believe it either. She has a future, an important future in the United States and in the State of Illinois. She has proved through her determination and hard work that she is an extraordinary young woman. She is going to get that bachelor's degree, and I pray that we in the Senate and the House—with the President—will give her a chance to be part of America.

President Obama did. He created DACA. I had introduced the DREAM Act years and years ago—16 years ago—when President Obama was my colleague in the Senate from Illinois. He was the cosponsor. I joined with Senator Lugar, a Republican Senator from Indiana, writing to President Obama, saying: Find a way, if you can. Find a way to protect these Dreamers from deportation until we pass a law that needs to be passed. And he did it. He created the DACA Program, where young people could come forward, pay the fine and fee of almost \$500 or \$600, submit themselves to a criminal background check to make sure there were no problems in their background, show proof that they had graduated from high school, and then—only then—would they be allowed to stay in the United States for 2 years and not be deported and legally be allowed to work.

Well, President Obama created by executive order the DACA Program. At the end of the day, 780,000 of these young people stepped forward. It was a leap of faith on their part. Each and every one of them had been raised in America by their parents and carefully schooled in this belief: Don't raise your head. Don't let this government see us. As long as we can live in the shadows, as long as we are not confronted with the legal system, we have a chance to stay. They lived with that looming over their heads every single day. Then, when President Obama said to them: Come forward, tell us who you are, where you live; tell us about your family; and we will give you a chance to stay here legally under this Executive order, they did it. They trusted in their leaders. They trusted in their government. They were prepared to make that leap of faith, at great risk, on the chance that this might be the ticket they were looking for to a life in America, to be part of America's dream and America's future.

Then, on September 5, President Trump came forward and announced

that he would abolish this program created by President Obama and that it would end on March 5, 2018. He established a standard and said: We will allow those who have to renew during this period of time—their 2-year DACA protection had expired, and they would have to renew—until November 5 to file and to qualify for a renewal period. He picked November 5. For many of them, it was a surprise and a challenge to come up with the filing fee and to get the papers in on time so that their protection would continue until March 5, 2018, or beyond. Some of them did everything they could think of. Some went to attorneys, for example, to make sure they got this renewal of DACA completed successfully and accurately.

Now we have learned that something terrible happened in the meantime. They relied on the Federal Government—particularly, they relied on our Postal Service—to mail in their applications for renewal. Who would have argued that that was not a responsible thing to do? I can tell my colleagues that practicing attorneys across the United States use our Postal Service regularly.

One attorney sent the renewal to Washington by certified mail so that there would be proof that it was mailed. He mailed it on October 21. The problem was that the Postal Service lost the application. It didn't arrive until a day later, a day past the deadline established by the President.

That young person has lost the right to renew unless the Department of Homeland Security comes up with a new ruling on the subject. That is the complexity of the life of these young people who are simply asking for a chance to be part of America's future. That is what that young applicant faced. That is what hundreds of others faced. We believe that some 8,000 were not able to renew in time and lost their protected status.

I can't tell you what their future is, but I pray that the Senate, before we leave this year, will decide the right thing for their future.

I have come to the floor over 100 times to tell the personal stories of these young people who are asking for a chance to have the Dream Act become the law of the land. Some Republican Senators have joined me in this effort. Notably, LINDSEY GRAHAM, the Republican Senator from South Carolina, has been a cosponsor. Three other Republican Senators have joined in sponsoring the Dream Act, and more are interested in helping. The conversations continue on the floor and give me some hope that, at the end of the day, we will do the right thing, before the end of this year.

Let me add, too, that having served in the Senate—it has been my honor to be here for some years—I know the calendar determines your fate many times in the Senate. The calendar we face could determine the fate of these Dreamers.

Here is what it boils down to. If we don't renew the Dream Act before the end of this year, then it has to be done in January or February. January and February are well known to be months of little activity in the Senate and in the House. So if we wait until then, it is not likely it is going to happen. That is why I am pleading with my colleagues and the leadership of the Senate: We can't go home for the holidays until we do this. We can't talk about dreaming of a white Christmas until we face the Dreamers and the bleak Christmas they face if we fail to act. I am begging my colleagues on both sides to roll up their sleeves and join me, sit at the table, and let's get this job done.

There are specific reasons why we should, and I want to tell one of those stories today, as I have done more than 100 times in the past.

This young lady's name is Priscilla Aguilar. Priscilla was 5 years old when her family brought her to the United States from Mexico. She grew up in Brownsville, TX. She was a great student. In high school she joined a medical magnet program and graduated in the top 10 percent of her class.

Priscilla was a member of the Health Occupations Students of America, where she participated in regional and State competitions in biomedical debate and medical reading. This experience sparked her love for science.

Priscilla went off to the University of Texas at Brownsville. She graduated with honors in the winter of 2012 with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences. Remember, as a Dreamer, she didn't qualify for any Federal assistance going to school. She had to work at jobs and borrow money from others to finish her education.

After graduation, Priscilla was accepted into Teach for America, a national nonprofit organization that places talented college graduates in urban and rural schools where there are special challenges and shortages of teachers. It is interesting, isn't it, that this young woman who was brought here at the age of 5 not only worked so hard for her own education but was then willing to give 2 years of her life in the schools of America to help less fortunate students. Do you think you have an insight into who she is and what her values are?

Priscilla is not alone. Twenty thousand DACA Dreamers are currently teaching across the United States of America, including 190 in the Teach for America Program.

Priscilla now teaches biological and medical microbiology at Mercedes High School in Mercedes, TX. She is the head of the Science Department. She oversees a team of nine science teachers. She teaches students of all grade levels and coaches the school's debate team. The team won the district championship last year and participated in the State championship.

In 2013, a tragedy struck Priscilla's family. Her mother died unexpectedly.

Currently, Priscilla is caring for her three younger siblings, all of whom were born in the United States and are U.S. citizens. In fact, almost 75 percent of Dreamers have a U.S. citizen spouse, child, or sibling.

Priscilla wrote me a letter, which I will read into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Science and learning are my biggest passions and I want to keep pushing myself forward so that I can be better equipped to serve my community and my students. I want to inspire and encourage all students to pursue careers in science. I want to be a role model and mentor to students by succeeding in a science career myself. If I can do it, so can they!

But without DACA, and without the Dream Act, Priscilla and 20,000 other teachers just like her will lose their jobs in America. I am not exaggerating. DACA gives Priscilla the legal right to work in America. If she loses that DACA protection on the March 5 deadline, or whenever her renewal comes up, at that point she can no longer work in the United States.

This is not an isolated case. I have told the story many times about 28 students at the Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago. They are all protected by DACA. They came to that medical school in open competition—no quotas, no special slots. They are the best and brightest. They came from all over the United States because Loyola University—thank goodness—decided they deserved a chance. Young people like them all across America who had given up on a medical education because they were undocumented finally had their chance under DACA. Twenty-eight of them now are dedicated to becoming doctors.

They can't borrow money from our Federal Government, as I mentioned before. The State of Illinois, under both a Democratic and Republican Governor, have created loan programs for them in medical school with one condition: For every year the State of Illinois helps to pay for their medical education, they have to pledge 1 year when they finish their medical degrees in service to our State, in areas where we have shortages of doctors—medically underserved areas.

So 28 of them now have their fate hanging in the balance, depending on the fate of the Dream Act. Why? Because to become a doctor, you need a residency. A residency is a job. A residency means legally working. If these young people lose the DACA and Dreamer protection, they have to drop out of medical school. They cannot continue their residency and pursue a specialty that they have had their heart set on.

That is the reality of our failure to act. That is the reality of losing Priscilla Aguilar as an inspiring science teacher in Texas, of losing 28 doctors who are on their way to graduation at Loyola University, and of literally thousands of others who could make America a better, more prosperous, and a more just Nation.

Why do we make this so hard? Why do we make it so difficult for these young people? They have overcome the odds. They have shown their determination. They have shown their love for this country. Many of these DACA Dreamers are begging to serve in our military, to risk their lives for America. Yet we have failed to act. The President draws a deadline and says: After this point, there will be no more protection for these young people. That isn't what America stands for. That does not reflect our values.

I stand here today honored to be the son of an immigrant to this country. My mother was brought here at the age of 2 from Lithuania. That immigrant family fought hard when they arrived, as most immigrant families do. By fate, my mother became a naturalized citizen and her son became a U.S. Senator. That is my story. That is my family's story, but it is America's story. It is a story that has been repeated millions of times over and over. People come here begging for a chance—a chance for a better life, a chance to make this a better nation.

These young people and their parents, I might add, deserve that kind of consideration. What we are considering today doesn't affect their parents and the Dream Act, but certainly we should give these young people a chance. I think their parents deserve it, too, but that is a debate for another day, perhaps. We will see.

In the meantime, I beg my colleagues to join us. Let's do something right this year, before the end of the year, that reflects our values of who we are. Let's acknowledge the obvious. Justice demands us to step up and stand behind these Dreamers.

The moment is about to arrive. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, my Republican cosponsor of the bill, said that a moment of reckoning is coming. He is right. It is a moment of reckoning as to who we are in the Senate and in the Congress and in the White House. It is a reflection on our view of America as a nation—a nation of immigrants that has embraced diversity and become all the stronger because of it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, unlike past occasions when I have spoken on the topic of gun violence prevention, I am actually pleased to talk about some good news. A powerful alliance across the aisle has enabled us this morning to introduce a measure that will be a modest but significant breakthrough. It is a breakthrough in

hopefully providing better data, more complete information for the database that provides for background checks. It is essential that more accurate and thorough data be provided in the database because background checks are no better than the information provided to them, as we have seen again and again, in Sutherland Springs most recently but also Charleston and Blacksburg, where individuals legally barred from accessing firearms were permitted to do so because of gaps in the NICS system. Each of those killers walked out of a gun store having purchased firearms from a federally licensed dealer, even though they should have been ineligible, because of gaps in the reporting system; that is, the information reported to the national system that collects that data and provides the underpinning for this program.

We are a bipartisan group that says, in effect, enforcement must be rigorous, as complete and effective as possible. New laws may be sought, and we will continue to seek a broader background check law, as well as a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. We in this coalition may be divided on those issues, but at the very least, we can join arms and link together on this measure.

These provisions will help enforce public safety protections that could mean the difference between life and death. Nonreporting now puts people at lethal risk, riddling with gaping holes a system that should keep guns away from killers. The Federal background check system is only as good as the information provided to it.

I am proud to be part of this alliance. I look forward to the next steps—the prompt passage of this legislation and other measures that perhaps will evoke the same kind of bipartisan spirit across the aisle.

I am working with a number of my Republican colleagues on a measure relating to military reporting, particularly as it concerns domestic violence. All of us who have been attorneys general, as the Presiding Officer has been, know the scourge of domestic violence and how much more dangerous it is—five times more lethal—when there is a gun in the house. More than half of the homicides in this country occur as a result of domestic violence. More effective enforcement requires steps that enable resources as well as awareness in the military and in our civilian courts.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on the topic of effective enforcement of the law, I rise today on a related topic, which is the quality of our judiciary. Our laws are only as effective as the judges who implement them.

I rise with regret because the administration is attempting to radically reshape our judiciary, to remake the bench in the image of a far-right dogma that basically contravenes what we are and where we are as a nation.

This administration has proposed extreme nominees who will seek to undo

decades of critically important progress in recognizing and protecting reproductive rights, LGBT rights, voting rights, workers' rights, environmental protections, and more.

For the last 10 months, this administration has tried its level best to move our country backward by implementing its destructive, deeply unpopular agenda. They want to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. They want to abandon LGBT Americans. They want to make it harder to vote, harder to organize, harder to breathe clean air and drink clean water.

If they fall short in carrying out this cruel agenda through Executive action and legislation, this administration has looked to the courts to do its dirty work. The Trump administration seeks to flood the Federal judiciary with judges—appointed for life—who will defend their indefensible goals. This plot is not hidden. It is not secret. It is out in the open. President Trump has made it clear. He claims to have a litmus test for Supreme Court nominees—he will nominate someone who will “automatically” overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Just last month, the Senate voted to confirm two circuit court nominees—Allison Eid and Joan Larsen—who had been listed by then-Candidate Trump as potential Supreme Court nominees, indicating that they have passed that litmus test. When I asked both of these nominees whether their records would lead someone to believe that they would “automatically” reverse *Roe v. Wade*, they both demurred. They said they did not know why they were selected for President Trump's Supreme Court short list—no idea. I don't believe it. Then-Candidate Trump laid out his Supreme Court selection criteria in clear, unambiguous terms.

Yesterday we heard testimony from a circuit court nominee, Justice Don Willett, of the Texas Supreme Court, who proudly described himself in 2012 as the “consensus, conservative choice from every corner of the conservative movement: pro-life, pro-faith, pro-family, pro-liberty, pro-Second Amendment, pro-private property rights, and pro-limited government.” That is the way that he described himself.

When I asked him what he meant by tying himself to these labels, he refused to give me a straight answer. In fact, he said, in effect, that he was just pandering to the public for votes, that that was part of his reelection pitch. Maybe he didn't believe it, but we have all been around long enough to know what these terms mean to voters and what they mean to the President of the United States. They aren't dog whistles, literally, but they represent specific ideologies. They are shorthand for specific dogma.

I have no confidence that Justice Willett will be an impartial and objective implementer of the law and enforcer of the measures that we pass here.

Just last week, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to advance Brett

Talley. He is someone who wrote that the solution to the Newtown shooting—he wrote it 3 days after that massacre—is to “stop being a society of pansies and man up.” He is someone who has written that the country “overreacted” and that “the Second Amendment suffered” after the murder of 20 children and 6 adults in Newtown.

After one of the great tragedies of this country in recent years, his reaction was that the Second Amendment suffered. He is someone who has disingenuously written that Democrats want to take away everyone's guns. Even setting aside the fact that he has never tried a case in his career, he is someone who should be nowhere near the bench, at least not as a judge.

I hope my Republican colleagues will revisit their decision to support him.

I want to emphasize that the compromise that we have reached today and that we are introducing in this bipartisan group takes away no one's guns if one is law-abiding and otherwise complies with the law. In fact, it provides incentives and rewards to States that do better reporting. It makes sure that a robust reporting system prevents the sales of firearms to people who are a danger to themselves or others, including convicted domestic abusers.

This exaggeration, distortion, misinformation from Mr. Talley is, I think, emblematic of what kind of judge he would be.

Let us not forget that we are, in fact, judged by the company that we keep. President Trump is willing to nominate someone like Jeff Mateer to a lifetime appointment on the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Texas. He was not on the docket this week, but he could well come before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a hearing in the coming weeks.

This is someone who has called transgender children “Satan's plan.” He has proudly said: “On the basis of sexual orientation, we discriminate.” He has advocated conversion therapy for LGBT children.

With these nominations, President Trump has shown the type of people he is willing to propose for lifetime appointments on the district court, as well as the court of appeals. As someone who has practiced in the district courts of Connecticut and others around the country, as well as in courts of appeals in the Second Circuit and elsewhere, these appointments have a special meaning to me and to others who are well versed in the way our justice system works.

For many people in this country, the U.S. district court is the first place they seek justice. They rely on Federal judges to be above politics and to be above personal ideology and dogma of the right or the left wing. The U.S. district court is the first place they seek justice, and, for many, it is the last place. Adverse rulings for them are often the end of the line because they lack the resources to pursue appeals to

the circuit court. Our district court judges are often the voices and faces of justice that the people of the United States most trust and rely on.

What we see in these nominees is a pattern. They have clearly demonstrated through their actions, their statements, their temperaments, and their characters that they are, simply, unfit and unable to serve as impartial judges, especially when it comes to our Nation's most vulnerable communities. Our Nation's most vulnerable communities are often the ones who rely the most on those Federal courts.

There can be no benefit of the doubt for nominees when they articulate the kinds of beliefs and dogma that these individuals have in their pasts and that they refuse to disavow in the present. I will oppose them, and I hope my colleagues will join me. I believe that on both sides of the aisle, we share a commitment to the credibility and trust of our judiciary.

As I have said before on the floor, our judges do not have armies; they do not have police forces. The enforceability of their rulings really depends on the credibility and trust that the people of our Nation have in them as individuals who put on robes, because they are supposed to put aside their personal prejudices and beliefs and fairly, impartially, and objectively enforce the law.

I fear that these nominees lack these qualities, and that is a tragedy for our Nation, whatever your politics. Someday, you will likely be before a judge—maybe not all, but many of you will—and you will want that judge to look at both sides of the courtroom and say that they both have an equal chance to make their cases, not tilt one way or the other because of the judge's personal beliefs. I hope that my colleagues will send a message to the President of the United States that one cannot politicize the American judiciary.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the nomination of Mr. Joseph Otting to be Comptroller of the Currency. The OCC's mission is to ensure that the financial institutions it oversees operate in a safe and sound manner, provide fair access to financial services, treat customers fairly, and comply with the applicable laws and regulations.

The OCC is responsible for overseeing the supervision of all national banks and Federal savings associations as well as Federal branches and agencies of foreign banks. The OCC also plays an important role in identifying and re-

sponding to emerging threats in our financial system.

Mr. Otting is exceptionally qualified to lead the OCC as its comptroller. His unique expertise and understanding of the banking sector has been shaped by over three decades of firsthand industry experience. Mr. Otting has held positions at large regional and community financial institutions, including key leadership positions. In fact, he has touched virtually every segment of the industry, working in consumer services, business services, human resources, compliance, audit, and many others.

His understanding of how banks work and knowledge of the laws and regulations governing the financial sector was evident throughout his nomination hearings. I was also encouraged by Mr. Otting's statements about the importance of ensuring that all Americans have access to banking products and services. Mr. Otting also reaffirmed his commitment to honor the OCC's mission and cooperating with the work of Congress.

I am confident Mr. Otting will bring strong leadership to the OCC, given his extensive experience in the financial industry. I urge my colleagues to support Mr. Otting's nomination today and vote for his confirmation in the future.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, notwithstanding rule XXII, at 1:30 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to legislative session and the Chair lay before the Senate the conference report to accompany H.R. 2810, as under the previous order, and that there be 15 minutes of debate equally divided between the managers or their designees prior to the vote on the adoption of the conference report; further, that following disposition of the conference report, the Senate resume executive session and all postcloture time on the Coggins and Friedrich nominations be yielded back and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Coggins nomination immediately, and that the confirmation vote on the Friedrich nomination occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 27; finally, that if the nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the Senate be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in this series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield back the time on the Otting nomination, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Otting nomination?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 277 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Cochran	Hoeben	Rubio
Collins	Inhofe	Sasse
Corker	Isakson	Scott
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kennedy	Strange
Crapo	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	Manchin	Tillis
Enzi	McCain	Toomey
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Harris	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Sanders
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schatz
Brown	Hirono	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Stabenow
Carper	Klobuchar	Tester
Casey	Leahy	Udall
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Peters	

NOT VOTING—3

Booker	Franken	Menendez
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis, Tom Cotton, Cory Gardner, Jerry Moran, John Barrasso, Luther Strange, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Richard Burr, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, David Perdue, Marco Rubio, John Thune, John Boozman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 96, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 278 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Perdue
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Harris	Reed
Boozman	Hassan	Risch
Brown	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heinrich	Rounds
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sanders
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
Cochran	Kaine	Shaheen
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Coons	King	Stabenow
Corker	Klobuchar	Strange
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Tester
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Cruz	Markey	Toomey
Daines	McCain	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	Young

NAYS—1

Hirono

NOT VOTING—3

Booker Franken Menendez

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 96, the nays are 1.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Donald C.

Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis, Tom Cotton, Cory Gardner, Jerry Moran, John Barrasso, Luther Strange, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Richard Burr, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, David Perdue, Marco Rubio, John Thune, John Boozman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 93, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 279 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Barrasso	Flake	Nelson
Bennet	Gardner	Paul
Blumenthal	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Peters
Boozman	Harris	Portman
Brown	Hassan	Reed
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Cantwell	Heinrich	Roberts
Capito	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cardin	Heller	Rubio
Carper	Hoeven	Sanders
Casey	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Schatz
Cochran	Johnson	Schumer
Collins	Kaine	Scott
Coons	King	Shaheen
Corker	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Strange
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Manchin	Tester
Cruz	Markey	Thune
Daines	McCain	Tillis
Donnelly	McCaskill	Toomey
Duckworth	McConnell	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	
Enzi	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

Van Hollen
Warner

Whitehouse
Wicker

Wyden
Young

NAYS—4

Gillibrand
Hirono

Kennedy
Warren

NOT VOTING—3

Booker Franken Menendez

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 93, the nays are 4.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate the conference report to accompany H.R. 2810, which will be stated by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2810), to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agreed to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of November 9, 2017.)

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the conference report for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. This legislation is the culmination of months of bipartisan work. I want to thank my friend, the Senator from Rhode Island, as well as our colleagues in the House of Representatives, MAC THORNBERRY and ADAM SMITH, and the

dozens of members who served on the conference committee for their hard work and collaboration during this process. Together, we worked hard to negotiate the differences between the House and Senate versions of this bill, and the result is a piece of legislation that should make all Senators—and all Americans—proud.

The fundamental purpose of the National Defense Authorization Act is to provide our Armed Forces with the resources, training, and equipment they need to keep us safe. We should consider this our highest duty and our greatest honor, to keep faith with the brave Americans who serve and sacrifice on our behalf.

To do that, the NDAA authorizes funding, advances policies, and requires reforms that will support our men and women in uniform, but before I discuss the many laudable aspects of this legislation, let me lament for a moment the developments that have unfolded in recent days and delayed this important legislation.

This delay concerns a provision in the defense bill to get our military emergency approval to use new lifesaving medicines on the battlefield. This provision was included in the original Senate version of this legislation that has been publicly available for several months, and it was included in this conference report with strong bipartisan and bicameral support. For years, the Department of Defense has struggled in vain to gain approval by the Food and Drug Administration for certain vital medical products, such as freeze-dried plasma, for use by our troops on the battlefield. Because the FDA failed to act time and again, the Senate Armed Services Committee did, and we received strong support from our House colleagues.

It is outrageous that the National Defense Authorization Act has been held hostage by the desire to pass a separate piece of legislation to address this issue differently than this conference report. That separate legislation was the product of a compromise between the DOD and the FDA, to which neither the Senator from Rhode Island nor I was a party. Our preferred solution remains our original one.

Yesterday, the Senator from Rhode Island and I received a letter from the FDA Commissioner, Dr. Scott Gottlieb, expressing his personal commitment to approve the use of freeze-dried plasma for battlefield use by our troops. He has also pledged to establish a new process for expedited consideration of the DOD's future emergency medical requests. This did not happen by accident. It happened because we acted and because we exposed the unacceptable ways in which the FDA has been failing our men and women in uniform for far too long.

Dr. Gottlieb was only confirmed as FDA Commissioner in May, and we intend to hold him fully accountable for making good on his commitment, including through continued oversight by

the Senate Armed Services Committee. However, if we are not satisfied that this new DOD-FDA compromise has fixed the problem, the Senate Armed Services Committee will take action through the NDAA next year. I know that the chairman and ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee have expressed that same commitment. We owe nothing less to our men and women in uniform, who deserve our help in saving lives on the battlefield.

Ultimately, that is the goal of every provision of the National Defense Authorization Act—to protect our brave servicemembers, here at home and around the world. The NDAA authorizes funding to rebuild our military and allow the Defense Department to embark on an ambitious program of modernization that is desperately needed and long overdue. The NDAA authorizes the acquisition of ships, aircraft, and equipment above and beyond the administration's request. It provides funding for an increase in end strength across all services, laying the groundwork for a total force, ready and capable of rising to the challenges of a world where threats are on the rise.

The NDAA builds on the reforms this Congress has passed in recent years, continuing efforts to reorganize the Department of Defense, spur innovation in defense technology, and improve acquisition and business operations to strengthen accountability and streamline the process of getting our warfighters what they need to succeed. It prioritizes accountability from the Department and demands the best use of every taxpayer dollar.

This legislation also authorizes funding for our missile defense systems to protect against rising threats. It makes important efforts to correct the dangerous lack of an effective strategy and policy for the information domain, including cyber, space, and electronic warfare.

The NDAA authorizes a 2.4 percent pay raise for our troops, which is the largest in many years, and it includes several provisions to improve quality of life for our men and women in uniform. In particular, the legislation continues committee's efforts to protect our servicemembers from sexual assault and sexual harassment. There is more work to be done, and the committee will continue to conduct oversight and hold hearings to address these important issues.

In total, the National Defense Authorization Act supports a defense budget of \$700 billion for fiscal year 2018. This exceeds the administration's request by \$26 billion. It also exceeds the defense spending caps in the Budget Control Act by \$85 billion.

Earlier this week, 356 Members of the House of Representatives voted in favor of this spending level. This afternoon, an overwhelming majority of this body will do the same. Let this serve as a reminder of the troubling state of our military today and an ac-

knowledge that the Budget Control Act-level of defense spending is insufficient and unacceptable.

My friends, for too long, our Nation has asked our men and women in uniform to do too much with far too little. Our military's job is hard enough, but we are making it harder through continuing resolutions, unpredictable funding, and arbitrary spending caps that were put into law 6 years ago—before the rise of ISIS, before the current crisis with North Korea, before Russia's return to aggression on the world stage, and before so many other dangerous developments.

We have been warned that we cannot go on like this. Earlier this year, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, warned us, "In just a few years if we don't change the trajectory, we will lose our qualitative and our quantitative competitive advantage, [and] the consequences will be profound." Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis also warned us, saying, "We are no longer managing risk; we are now gambling."

We are gambling with risk, and we are gambling with lives. Today more of our men and women in uniform are being killed in totally avoidable training accidents and routine operations than by our enemies in combat.

My friends, it doesn't have to be this way. The NDAA shows us what we could do with an adequate level of defense spending, what we could provide for our men and women in uniform, but this legislation is only part of the solution. As of yet, we still have no path to actually appropriate the money that we are about to authorize. That requires a bipartisan agreement to adjust the spending caps in the Budget Control Act.

As we join our colleagues in the House in voting to support \$700 billion for defense, let this serve as a guidepost for our leaders in Congress and the White House as they negotiate a budget deal. This is the spending level that an overwhelming majority of both the House and the Senate believes is necessary to meet current threats and to keep faith with our men and women in uniform. After we vote to authorize these vital, additional resources for our military, we must all demand a bipartisan agreement so that we can appropriate those resources.

This will require hard work and tough choices, and it will demand that we have the courage of our convictions, but in the end, this will require much less of us than what we ask of from our men and women in uniform. As they so dutifully sacrifice for us every day, let us do our part and fulfill our duties to them and to the Nation they serve.

Mr. LEAHY Mr. President, the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, while laudable in its goals, does not comport with reality. At roughly \$700 billion, the proposed base funding in this bill is \$85 billion above budget caps that are set in law for Fiscal Year 2018 in the Budget Control

Act, BCA, and \$31 billion above the administration's budget request. If the authorized funding level were to be appropriated, without changing the caps, it would trigger a 12-percent across-the-board sequester of Defense programs to bring spending levels back to the Fiscal Year 2018 levels contained in the Budget Control Act. A sequester of this size would hit us in readiness. It would hamper our day-to-day operations and maintenance. It would hurt our troops. Our military leaders do not support such a sequester.

If we really want to support our military and the men and women in uniform, we must immediately reach a bipartisan budget deal to lift the artificial and unrealistically low budget caps that were set in law in 2011. It is hard to get every Member of this Chamber to agree on anything, but on this, we can agree: Sequester has had a negative impact on our country that will impact a generation. We need to have an honest conversation about what the needs of our country are, both in military and domestic spending, and draft our spending bills accordingly.

I do appreciate the work that Senator McCAIN and Senator REED have put into this massive legislation. While my concerns with the funding levels authorized in this bill prevent me from supporting it, I do believe it reflects a strong commitment to the programs and policies that support our service members and their families. That must always be our goal.

I am pleased that the conferenced bill maintains support for medical research that matter so much to our servicemembers and to all Americans who benefit from the lifesaving results made possible through these programs. I am also grateful for the inclusion of language I authored that would pave the way for piloting a preventative mental health program for our National Guard and Reserve. Like physical health, we know that, with particular training and mental preparation, a person can be more resilient mentally when faced with challenges, and building that readiness is necessary to maintain the all-volunteer force. Progress is already being made with shifting to a preventative model in the Special Forces community. I hope to soon see similar progress in developing models for the members of our Guard and Reserve.

This final bill also includes several amendments I proposed to make sure U.S. efforts, especially in Afghanistan, are consistent with U.S. values. These include a provision aimed at improving the way the Departments of Defense and State provide human rights training to partner forces, and a requirement to establish a plan on how to improve our ability to help foreign governments protect civilians. The final bill also authorizes establishment of a position in the Department of Defense to oversee its implementation of and coordination with the Department of State on the Leahy law for human

rights vetting for Afghan security forces.

In 3 weeks and 1 day, the current resolution funding our government will expire; yet, instead of sitting down with Democrats to work together, just as we did earlier this year to enact the fiscal year 2017 omnibus spending bill, to find a path forward to raise the budget caps and fund our government for the rest of the fiscal year, Republicans are focused on a tax cut bill that will add \$1.5 trillion to the debt. Instead of acting responsibly and in the greatest traditions of the Senate, the majority is marching towards another partisan fight on the floor on a deeply flawed tax bill that will impact every corner of our economy.

Let's get to work for the American people. For months, have been calling for a bipartisan budget deal to lift the caps on both sides for both defense and nondefense programs based on parity. It is time to complete those negotiations. We owe it to the men and women who serve. We owe it to the American people.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be considered yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the conference report.

The conference report was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume executive session.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time on the Coggins and Friedrich nominations is yielded back.

VOTE ON COGGINS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Coggins nomination?

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 280 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Perdue
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Harris	Reed
Boozman	Hassan	Risch
Brown	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heinrich	Rounds
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sanders
Cardin	Hirono	Sasse
Carper	Hoeben	Schatz
Casey	Inhofe	Schumer
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott
Cochran	Johnson	Shaheen
Collins	Kaine	Shelby
Coons	Kennedy	Stabenow
Corker	King	Strange
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Tester
Cotton	Leahy	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Manchin	Toomey
Daines	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	Young

NOT VOTING—4

Booker
Franken

McCain
Menendez

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 481, Gregory Katsas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Gregory G. Katsas, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby

move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gregory G. Katsas, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, Ben Sasse, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, Tom Cotton, Ron Johnson, Mike Lee, James Lankford, Jerry Moran, Lindsey Graham, Roger F. Wicker, Bob Corker.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, just a moment ago, the Senate acted to send the President one of the most important policy bills we consider each year—the National Defense Authorization Act.

Not only will this legislation authorize the resources, capabilities, pay, and benefits our men and women in uniform need to perform their missions, but this year's bill also goes further. It takes a notable step toward authorizing the resources needed to start rebuilding our military and restoring combat readiness.

It will help improve our missile defense capabilities and better prepare us to deal with cyber threats. It will authorize a well-deserved pay raise for our men and women in uniform while providing for continued reform of the benefits they and their families rely upon, and it will support the thousands of military servicemembers and families serving at military installations in Kentucky and in the Kentucky National Guard.

Further, this bill strives to bring reform to the Pentagon. As Senator MCCAIN said of the NDAA a few months ago, it will “[build] upon the sweeping reforms that Congress has passed in recent years.” He is right, and none of this would have been possible without him, without his leadership.

I think I can speak for everyone in this Chamber when I say that our friend Senator MCCAIN has served with distinction as chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I know the ranking member on his committee, Senator REED, thinks so as well. I know a lot of Members on both sides of the aisle do too.

Senator MCCAIN's commitment to our men and women in uniform is obvious, and it is unwavering. He respects these brave Americans immensely; he cares about them deeply; and he understands better than just about anyone how important a bill like this is to them, not only on a policy level but on a personal level as well.

The NDAA he worked so hard to pass has now cleared both Chambers. It is headed to the President's desk. Soon, it will become law. When it does, it will stand as yet another testament to the hard work, dedication, and unflappable determination of our colleague and friend Senator JOHN MCCAIN—truly, an American hero.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN FOREST

Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, I would like to say a few words today about Brian Forest, a key member of my legislative office team, who is leaving the Senate after several years of outstanding work in the Senate.

Throughout his time in my office, Brian has been an invaluable asset, taking on the daily challenges and countless responsibilities which come with the territory for my staff, but Brian did not just handle it all—he excelled. Regardless of the pressures, the deadlines, or the obstacles—and, believe me, there were many—Brian always came through.

Now, regretfully, he has decided to take on a whole new set of challenges. I am confident he will continue to show the same skill, friendship, and good humor that endeared him to many in the Senate because that is who Brian is.

I know I speak for all of those on my staff when I say I am really sorry to see him go. I wish Brian well in his new adventures, and I thank him for his service to our Nation, to the Senate, and to me.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as in morning business for such time as I shall consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this week, after 3 years of planning and construction, we now will be dedicating tomorrow and officially opening the Museum of the Bible.

This is led by Steve Green of Hobby Lobby. We all remember Hobby Lobby of Oklahoma. Steve has been a friend of mine and his parents have been friends of mine for a long period of time. He is the chairman of the board of directors for this long-awaited museum that will allow visitors from not just this country but from all over the world—they will be coming here to see what it is all about and how this plays a pivotal role in our country's history. There is no better place than Washington, DC, in our Nation's Capitol, to remind us of the scope of the Bible's impact on our history and our narrative. It has been long-awaited.

Indeed, one of our Founding Fathers, Patrick Henry, was renowned for his readings of the Bible. He said at the end of his life: “This book is worth all the books that ever were printed, and it has been my misfortune that I never found time to read it with the proper attention and feeling till lately.”

He is the one—and not many people are aware that historians are relooking at the history of this country, and they are saying we could not have won that war. I mean you have to sometimes close your eyes and envision the greatest army on the face of this Earth com-

ing down with thundering marches, going through Boston, and going up to Lexington and Concord. There is no way in this world that a handful of trappers and hunters could have won that thing. Yet we know why, and he knew why, when you talk about Patrick Henry. They said: We are not strong enough. It can't be done.

There is one thing they overlooked, and that is the strength that comes from God that we had, and they didn't have. He said:

We are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. . . . armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who [reigns] over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us.

And he did, and they fired that shot heard around the world.

I think that is really important today to think about because people come to this country and they want to know what makes America work.

I have been privileged to sponsor the African dinner every February, and people come in from all over Africa. They are always surprised when they come and they find out walking through the Capitol what real significance God and the Bible has to the history of this country. We are the largest Christian community in the world. We cannot and should not deny the role our Judeo-Christian values played in the formation of this country.

Our first President, George Washington, was steadfast in his belief of God, His law, and that liberty is God's gift. Washington's leadership was based on the conviction that Americans are entrusted by God to preserve basic freedoms established in the Constitution.

In a letter, Washington wrote, “We should be very cautious of violating the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the judge of the hearts of men and to Him only in this case they are answerable.”

It is clear our Founding Fathers recognized and enshrined the importance of religious liberty, one of our most precious and foundational religious freedoms that allowed them to live their lives according to the teaching of the Bible.

The Bible's role in the founding of America is just one remarkable example of how the Bible has profoundly shaped world history. It has influenced cultures in every corner of the globe, and the Museum of the Bible, which is going to be opening tomorrow, pays tribute to its impact and intersectionality with the world religions.

Whether considering the Bible through a secular or faith-based lens, it is impossible to deny its impact on individuals, countries, and, indeed, all world history. The Museum of the

Bible is the first educational experience I have encountered that truly appreciates the full magnitude of the Bible's role throughout history.

The six exhibits, curated by a panel of faith leaders that span religious and geographic divides, truly bring the Word of God to life in a way that positively educates, informs, and encourages people of all faiths and beliefs to learn more about the Bible.

General Washington reminded us in his Farewell Address: "Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion."

Steve Green's father David founded Hobby Lobby. I remember this so well because I was in the State legislature at the time this happened. They started in their garage making frames for pictures. It turned out to be this giant, worldwide corporation, the largest arts and crafts retailer in the history of America, currently or in the past.

Remember Hobby Lobby, when ObamaCare required that all employers provide free access to the pills that terminate pregnancies, David clearly recognized this as a violation of his faith. That is what America is all about. If you believe in it, you do it, you take a risk. He was risking millions of dollars, but the morality was so significant from the teachings of the Bible that he went ahead and did it. He took the challenge all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and won in a split decision. He successfully argued the importance to maintain the fundamental freedom of religion to apply his faith convictions to how he operates his private business.

David won his case, but his family understood we needed to do more. So he started the Museum of the Bible. I actually was there last June, when it was under construction at the time, as we walked through and visualized what it was going to look like later on. It is magnificent.

They have a stage, and you live on the stage. He is going to have performances there. I am so anxious to be there tonight, the night before the official opening, to see now what it looks like.

I am so grateful David's son Steve and his entire family are leading this effort to make the Bible and its impact more accessible to the whole world. I am especially honored that the museum will open on my birthday tomorrow. I am not sure they really knew that when they made the decision, but somebody knew it.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Mr. President, let me turn to another topic that I think is very important right now; that is, our energy independence. It is a huge issue. People are not aware, while we may have talked about the importance of the budget reconciliation process to set up and to pass the historic and much needed tax cuts for our individuals and small businesses, the process also allowed the Senate to use reconciliation for some-

thing equally as valuable—to allow energy exploration in Alaska.

Yesterday the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee met to consider legislation to open up a very small part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for responsible energy development. This bill was successfully passed by the committee, and I look forward to helping it continue to move through Congress.

I have long been an advocate for this to happen. It is interesting, the people in Alaska all want it. The polling is something like 96 percent of the people really want this to happen. They know the benefits that will come to Alaska, the money that will be there. People talk about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as if it is this great big thing. It is the size of South Carolina. It is a very small thing. Right now, we are going to be able to go up there to create jobs and opportunities and authorize the leases in Alaska. We will also increase revenue to the United States.

It is estimated that the energy production in Alaska could lead to over \$1 trillion in revenue. Responsible management will have a positive impact on reducing our national debt and most significantly opening ANWR is allowing Alaska to do what they want to do.

We are so good in this body thinking that we know more about what is good for Alaska and what is good for Oklahoma and what is good for Georgia than they do in their own States. One of few things we do right around this place is how we do our highway bill. In the highway bill, we get the priorities from the States when they come in, and they decide what it is they want to do in their States.

Remember the issue about the "bridge to nowhere." Everybody was concerned about this. All the talk shows jumped on it without realizing, until it was too late, it had already gotten committed.

Here was something that happened right for a change. I was chairman of the committee at that time. The "bridge to nowhere" in Alaska didn't go "nowhere," it went somewhere. The problem was, there weren't any people there once you got there, and the reason is you couldn't get there. On their list of 100 priorities, No. 4 was to build that bridge, but we, in our infinite wisdom here, said: No, you can't do that. Somehow the public didn't know what they were talking about. Well, that is kind of the same situation we have right now. We have something in Alaska that was their No. 1 priority to develop, and for years and years we have stopped them from being able to do with their land what they wanted to do with their land. The Federal Government has been keeping Alaskans from acting in their own best interest.

Finally, increasing energy production in Alaska is a key part of making the United States not only energy independent but energy dominant. We are on the verge of doing just that. Earlier this week, the Executive Direc-

tor of the International Energy Agency, Fatih Birol, said the United States "will become the undisputed global oil and gas leader for decades to come" and that "the growth in production is unprecedented, exceeding all historical levels." ANWR could be and should be a part of that story.

Energy independence is vital to our national security. How many of these countries over there that have been part of the old Soviet Union want their allegiance to us, and yet they are forced to buy their oil and gas from Russia and from Iran and they don't want to do it. Now we are taking them off the hook.

I had a great experience not long ago. I was invited by the President of Lithuania to come and open up their first terminal. Now we are changing all that.

We have a guy named Harold Hamm, an Oklahoman who is the chairman and CEO of Continental Resources in Oklahoma. He announced they would begin exporting oil to China. Exporting to China is kind of a big deal. He talks about how we are going to become undeniably a leader in exporting energy that will have an impact on the rest of the world.

President Trump has been clear that he intends to make the United States a net energy exporter, something we haven't been since 1953. Opening up the National Wildlife Refuge, which just took place this last week, will be a big step toward this initiative, and I applaud the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for helping the administration make this happen.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. President, the leader of the Senate, a few minutes ago, talked about the NDAA and JOHN MCCAIN's role in that. JOHN MCCAIN, of course, has been and is an American hero. Everybody knows his past and knows what he did and the suffering he went through.

He was very instrumental—sure, we had some disagreements on some of the finer parts of the bill—but this is one that had to be done. All of a sudden we are changing what happened, unfortunately, in the past.

I can remember about 3 years ago we got all the way to December before we voted this out. We have now voted. This is the 55th year in a row that we have passed a Defense authorization bill. If we didn't by the end of December, then our kids wouldn't be getting hazard pay or pilots wouldn't be getting flight pay, and it would be an absolute disaster. Of course, it didn't happen because we are now doing it.

I have to say this. One thing that hasn't been said enough is what Senator MCCAIN and a lot of his supporters were able to do; that is, reprioritize what defending America is about.

Read the Constitution. Look at the history of this country. I always say people should sometime get out that old document that nobody reads anymore, the Constitution, and see what we are supposed to be doing around here.

Do you know that what we are supposed to be doing in this body primarily is defending America, No. 1, and they called them post roads, back then, building roads and transportation. That is what we are supposed to be doing, but what has happened in our military is something people don't know about. I applaud our military in uniform now because they are saying it for the first time in my memory that we are in the most threatened position this country has ever been in. We have adversaries out there. Some are somewhat mentally deranged. They are rapidly getting or already have the capability of hitting an American city with a weapon. As tragic as it was when we went through 9/11, what a lot of people don't realize is, if that were to happen, a whole city could be wiped out.

The problem is that we have gotten away from prioritizing the fact that the No. 1 concern should be and the mission should be for us to defend America. To give an example, up through the 1960s, we spent over 50 percent of all the revenue that came into the Federal Government on defending America. Do you know what it is today, Mr. President? It is 15 percent. So we have gone from 50 percent down to 15 percent. What does that tell you? It tells you that the priorities aren't right.

So we have looked at this, and this is a first step. This MCCAIN-led NDAA is the first step in reprioritizing where we are. If anyone questions this, if you look at the Obama administration, when we were trying to recover on sequestration, he had a policy. He said: For every dollar we put in, we are going to have to put an equal amount into social programs. That shows you the lack of priority. All that is being changed.

About 10 minutes ago when I started, I quoted Patrick Henry. You stop and think about the courage it took at one time to get to the point that we are going to be progressing to, starting with this bill, when he said: There is a just God who reigns over the destinies of nations and who will raise up friends to fight our battles with us. The battle is not to the strong alone but to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Gentlemen may cry "peace," but there is no peace. Why stand we idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, is peace so sweet, it must be bought at the price of chains and slavery?

That is what it used to be. That was the priority. And this bill reestablishes that priority as the No. 1 priority, as our history reflects we should be doing, as our Constitution has charged us with doing, and we are doing it with the passage of the national defense authorization bill. We are on the road to recovery, and I am very excited about it.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to make a simple request of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. When it comes to the tax legislation that Republican colleagues are rushing through Congress, please stop, slow down, and let's start over together.

We need real tax reform with clear policy goals that will make our Nation more competitive, not a partisan attempt to pass something—anything—that can get 51 Republican votes in the Senate. Our shared policy goals should be making the Tax Code fairer, simpler, and fiscally responsible. If we can achieve these goals, that would be real tax reform.

If we worked together, we could take long overdue steps and build a tax code that lets working families in Michigan and across the country keep more of their hard-earned money, levels the playing field for our small businesses, and keeps good jobs here at home in the United States. Fairer, simpler, responsible—those are three key points making a tax code that works. If we don't start over, I am afraid the current tax legislation will fail on all three accounts.

First, this tax legislation is not fair. It dramatically moves toward benefiting the wealthiest people in this Nation, with only a little sliver of the benefits going to working-class families.

The Republican tax bill was clearly written to cut rates for CEOs and large corporations and treats the middle class like an afterthought. I would argue that working Americans who are struggling with stagnant wages—while the cost of prescription drugs, college, and housing continue to rise—need tax cuts that are built around them.

Instead, we are looking at a Republican tax plan that repeals the alternative minimum tax—a fail-safe designed specifically to make sure that wealthy Americans cannot deduct their way to paying nothing in taxes. From what little we have seen of President Trump's tax returns, we know that the AMT—the alternative minimum tax—is the only reason he paid income taxes at all. The Republican bill will eliminate the AMT, and President Trump and folks like him will receive a huge windfall and may not have to pay any taxes at all—zero.

Wall Street loves this bill, too, because hedge funds will continue to be taxed at lower rates than small businesses in our local communities. This means many hedge fund managers making millions of dollars will have a lower tax rate than an office assistant working at their firm. Simply put, this

proposal fails on the test of making the Tax Code fairer.

I also believe this effort fails on the test of making the code simpler. For small business owners back in Michigan, they want to spend their time doing what they know best, which is running their business, not spending days or weeks trying to figure out the taxes they owe. But, as many of my colleagues in the Finance Committee have pointed out throughout this week, the provisions for a small business passthrough serve only to make a complicated tax code even more complicated—yes, even more complicated.

Expert analysis says that the passthrough provisions will require years of rulemakings and thousands of pages of additional rules and regulations. As a small business owner, unless your hobby is studying the Internal Revenue Code, this bill is going to make your life a whole lot more difficult.

Finally, on the last test, the test of whether or not this bill is responsible, this proposal fails miserably. Writing responsible tax legislation means making hard choices—closing loopholes and balancing out the pros and cons of any action.

Congress has the responsibility to take seriously the threat of a growing national debt, and we have to think about this when changing our Tax Code. But instead of working to reduce our debt, which we are passing on to our children and grandchildren, this proposal actually adds more than \$1 trillion to our deficit. And it would be even more expensive, but in a haphazard attempt to limit the cost, the majority has put forward a bill where hundreds of millions of dollars of provisions that middle-class families could use to reduce their taxes expire at random times over the next few years.

When you add it all up and factor in the additional interest costs to carry this new debt, you have a proposal that adds over \$2 trillion to the Federal debt, according to the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. It is wildly irresponsible to pile on this debt to finance a tax break for the wealthiest people in this country, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Tax reform can be bipartisan. The goal of tax reform must be fairer, simpler, and responsible. This isn't just idealism or wishful thinking. We have seen it happen before. When Ronald Reagan worked with Congress to pass tax reform in 1986, the bill received 97 votes in the U.S. Senate—yes, 97 votes. That is the sort of bipartisan approach we need, and we need to start working on that now.

Michiganders—and all Americans—deserve a tax code that is fairer, simpler, and more responsible, not more multinational corporate giveaways and more debt.

I will not stop fighting for hard-working American families and small businesses who deserve to see more take-home pay, and I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join me.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon the conclusion of my remarks, the Senator from Rhode Island be recognized.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my deep concern with the tax reform bill that the Senate Finance Committee is likely to approve later this week. The latest version of this massive tax bill, which will impact every single American, was only released to the public late Tuesday night. Less than 48 hours later, the Finance Committee is ramming through this bill on a party-line vote without any hearings and without a thorough review of the bill.

I strongly disagree with the closed-door process of developing the substance of a bill which skews the benefits to the wealthy at the expense of middle-class families and with this bill's irresponsible cost of \$1.7 trillion over 10 years. I also want to tell my colleagues and the President that there is still an opportunity for us to do the right thing and to work together on tax reform.

We should follow the example of the last time there was successful tax reform enacted by Congress. This was led by Republican President Ronald Reagan, Democratic Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, and Members of Congress from both parties, who worked together back in 1986 to pass major tax reform legislation. Sure, they had strong disagreements, but they held lengthy public debates, compromised on both sides of the aisle, and eventually passed a major tax reform bill that was bipartisan, was fair, and did not add to our deficits and national debt.

For some reason, my Republican colleagues seem to have forgotten the example of the last time the Congress actually passed tax reform. It happened because both parties worked together. It happened because both parties compromised. And while I believe there is still time for us to undertake this approach, what we are seeing right now is the exact opposite. I think that is a big mistake.

When I am on the train back to Wilmington or when I am at home in my State of Delaware hearing from my constituents, my message about this bill is simple: I am worried what this bill will do to our fiscal health as a country and the middle class, and you should be too.

Let me start by quoting a story from the Washington Post today whose

headline reads "Senate tax bill cuts taxes of wealthy and hikes taxes on families earning under \$75,000 over a decade." Let me repeat that. The Senate tax bill cuts the taxes of the wealthy and hikes taxes on families earning under \$75,000. The story is based on a report from the nonpartisan Joint Commission on Taxation which shows that the claims from President Trump and my Republican colleagues that this bill is all about tax relief for the middle class are simply wrong.

I will quote from this story:

By the year 2027, Americans earning \$30,000 to \$75,000 a year—

Solidly middle-class folks—

would also be forced to pay more in taxes even though people earning over \$100,000 would continue to get substantial tax cuts.

Unfortunately, though, that is not the end of my concerns with this legislation. I am also alarmed by how much this bill would add to our Nation's budget deficits and by the long-term impacts it would have on our debt.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, this tax bill—this Republican-only tax bill—will cost over \$1.7 trillion over 10 years. That is \$1.7 trillion with a "t." What happened to my colleagues who spent years talking about the danger posed by a growing national debt? Now these very same Senators and Representatives are willing to put almost \$2 trillion on our Nation's credit card. It is an astounding figure—more than twice as large as the emergency stimulus package Congress passed in 2009 to prevent the next Great Depression. It is more than twice as much as the much maligned so-called bailout that Congress authorized to prevent the collapse of the financial system.

What does \$1.7 trillion buy us? What is the great return on investment that would justify borrowing \$1.7 trillion—mostly from China—in a time of near record-low unemployment? The Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, publicly bragged that their tax plan would produce 1 million jobs. That sounds good but not when you consider the cost. My math may not be great, but if you spend \$1.7 trillion to get 1 million jobs, that is \$1.5 million per job. That is not a great return on investment.

To add insult to injury, the majority believes they can use this bill to also cut access to healthcare for millions of Americans because they have decided at the last moment to include a repeal of the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate—a critical part of that bill—law, which helps ensure a healthy risk pool, which, in turn, lowers premiums.

Those who actually work in healthcare know this is a bad idea. That is why the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Hospital Association, and America's Health Insurance Plans have all come out against the inclusion of the individual mandate repeal in this bill, saying that "eliminating the individual mandate by itself likely will result in a

significant increase in premiums, which would substantially increase the number of uninsured Americans."

The nonpartisan CBO agrees. They found that repealing the mandate will cause 13 million people to lose their healthcare by 2027, and average premiums would increase about 10 percent each year.

The inclusion of the mandate repeal to pay for corporate tax cuts will hurt middle-class families across our country. It is politics at its worst, throwing aside the needs of our constituents to ensure that a small group of the wealthy get wealthy. That is because the core of this bill is based on a promise proven false time and again—that tax cuts for the richest Americans and most profitable corporations will somehow trickle down to help the majority of working Americans. We know that is not how our economy has actually worked. Even President Reagan's own budget director, David Stockman, said yesterday that this bill isn't going to increase wages for the middle class.

The Senate bill proposes we cut the top corporate rate nearly in half; exempt more wealthy individuals from the estate tax, which impacts only the top 0.2 percent of Americans; repeal the alternative minimum tax, which affects those making hundreds of thousands annually; and cut tax rates for those earning over \$1 million.

Altogether, the core elements of this plan amount to \$1.7 trillion in tax cuts, and my Republican colleagues are simply asking us to trust them that the benefits will somehow reach the middle class.

If that isn't enough to prove that this bill being rushed through in today's markup is bad policy, my colleagues in the majority went one step further in this latest version by eliminating all tax breaks for middle-class families in 8 years while making the tax cuts for corporations permanent. This means that millions of middle-class families will see a tax hike in the future in order to fund permanency for corporate tax breaks. That is just not right.

So here is what I think we should do. Let's slow down. Let's work together, Republicans and Democrats, to pass a bill that is actually good for all Americans. I believe we can get that done. I think it is our job and our duty. We don't have to start from scratch. There are bipartisan ideas. There are introduced, bipartisan tax bills that could make our code simpler and fairer and more effective.

I will mention two examples of bills I have introduced—one with Republican Senator SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO and another with Republican Senator PAT ROBERTS—that encourage manufacturers to use made-in-America parts and incentivize companies that invent something here to make it here. I have introduced another bill with Republican Senator JERRY MORAN—it has eight bipartisan cosponsors—and with Republican Congressman TED POE that would alter the Tax Code to boost

every aspect of the American energy industry, from oil and gas to the latest renewable and clean energy technologies. These are just a few ideas, but they represent a simple truth: that we can and should work together on tax reform instead of making this one more pointless, partisan battle.

The same thing is true for our healthcare system. The American people have overwhelmingly said they want a bipartisan and open process to fix healthcare, not a one-party scheme by either party that throws our system into chaos with no plan to replace it.

I encourage President Trump and Republican leaders to stop trying to pass tax reform with only Republicans and to reach across the aisle to work with Democrats and pass something we can all get behind.

TRIBUTE TO MEGAN O'NEILL

Mr. President, while I appreciate the opportunity to talk today about the very real need for bipartisan tax reform that helps working families, grows the economy, and doesn't increase our debt, I wish to turn to another important topic—the impending departure from my office of Megan O'Neill, my director of scheduling.

Megan has been a part of our office for more than 5 years. She leaves later this month for an exciting new opportunity in New York City.

Megan is quite simply one of the most capable, resourceful, intelligent, effective, and kind people I have ever had the honor of knowing or working with. One of the most well-worn sayings here in Washington is that “everyone is replaceable.” While that may be true for me, and it may be true for the Acting President *pro tempore*, and it may be true for many others here, it is simply not true of Megan. She is truly irreplaceable. I owe Megan a huge debt of gratitude for her years of service to my office, to Delaware, and to our country.

Many of us who have worked with her will gather to thank her and wish her well, but I also wanted to take a few minutes to talk about—and probably embarrass—this remarkable woman.

Megan is from nearby Chevy Chase, MD, but more important, at least in my opinion, is that she graduated from the University of Delaware as a “Fighting Blue Hen” with a degree in economics and international relations. She interned in my Wilmington office during her senior year at UD and quickly became a staff favorite.

Upon graduating, Megan moved to Washington, and I hired her as a staff assistant, working at the front desk in my DC office. It is a particularly demanding job—juggling visiting constituents, constant phone calls, and supervising interns. She proved herself to be mature and capable. I promoted her several times in quick succession until she took over as my director of scheduling in August of 2015.

Over the course of her time in my office, I have come to deeply respect her as a professional, but more impor-

tantly, I have come to admire her as a person. In addition to being incredibly competent, strategic, and quick on her feet, it is Megan's boundless patience and optimism I will most miss. Regardless of how stressful, jam-packed, and uncertain a day may be, Megan is always able to ensure that everything gets done; that every constituent is heard, every important issue is raised, and that this Senator doesn't lose his mind.

Megan is also famous for her seemingly permanent smile and sunny disposition. Some of her colleagues in my office chimed in with a few anecdotes. Oftentimes, I was told, throughout the day, Megan will announce she is off to get a “fun drink,” which might sound like a Margarita but is, in fact, always a raspberry lemonade-flavored Dasani sparkling water. When something comes up—whether it is a favorite TV show, album, or new restaurant, she exclaims: “That's my jam!” She also loves to travel, but one thing that makes her different is that when she has an upcoming trip, she is just as excited to plan it out minute by minute as she is to actually go.

I can't talk about Megan without mentioning her family. She speaks frequently and lovingly about her parents Michael and Donna O'Neill and her younger brother Matt. As anyone who knows Megan is well aware, each summer, she is a key part of O'Neill week when she joins her parents, brother, cousins, and extended family in beautiful Bethany Beach, DE, to play Olympic-style beach games, eat, drink, and enjoy each other's company.

Anyone who understands the Senate knows how essential schedulers are to everything that goes on here. No staffer has a more challenging, demanding, or complex role. We Senators have big vocabularies for our long-winded speeches, but the most important word a scheduler says is “no,” and Megan mastered the art of saying no in a firm, professional, appropriate way, even when this Senator seems to always want to say yes.

Schedulers wear too many hats to count. They are field generals, firefighters, political advisers, logisticians, psychologists, diplomats, managers, and air traffic controllers. They work as hard or harder than anyone else here but so often go unseen or unheard. Maybe that is why Senate schedulers are a very tight-knit group. Megan often speaks with great fondness and respect for her counterparts in other Senate offices, and it does not surprise me that they think highly of her.

One of Megan's counterparts said she is “always quick to share advice and ideas, and has been a great source of support when any [of] her colleagues need some kind words. She is efficient and effective while also being so nice and compassionate.”

Megan's compassion is, at the end of the day, what makes her such an incredible person and an irreplaceable

part of our team. Regardless of who someone may be, when they work with Megan, they are treated with dignity and respect. Time and again, I have heard from people who are so grateful for her generosity, patience, and kindness. I have seen her help and stick up for her colleagues, even when that was difficult to do.

Let me close by simply saying to my friend and colleague Megan O'Neill: Thank you. Thank you for everything you have done for me, for your colleagues, for your friends in the Senate, for the State of Delaware, and our country. The Senate is a place full of amazing, talented people, but even among them, you have stood out in your time here, and we will all miss you dearly. Thank you.

The ACTING PRESIDENT *pro tempore*. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

Mr. REED. Mr. President, it is our responsibility to ensure that future generations will have greater opportunity and greater security than we inherited from our parents and our forebears. To accomplish this, we must put aside political expedience and take a sober look at the health of our national economy and our ability to keep our commitments at home and around the world. With this in mind, I rise to urge my colleagues to reject the partisan and fiscally irresponsible Republican tax proposals in the so-called Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. When we strip away the rosy, but false, economic projections and ideologically motivated economic theories the Republicans have been using to hype this bill, it is clear this bill trades away our nation's long-term economic health and the well-being of working Americans, the poor, the sick, and the old in order to benefit the wealthy. Moreover, this bill will take us trillions of dollars deeper into debt at a time when the costs of 16 years of debt-financed wars continue to mount. Republicans owe it to our country and to future generations who will be stuck with the multi-trillion-dollar cost of this bill to go back to the drawing board and produce a balanced and permanent bipartisan path forward on our Nation's broken Tax Code.

It does not take an economist to see that the Republican tax bill is a historic \$1.5 trillion transfer of wealth from poor and working Americans to the very wealthiest among us, but a few of its glaring injustices are worth mentioning. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, it gives over twice as much tax relief to millionaires as it does to Americans making under \$50,000. Just 5,000 of the wealthiest American families will receive hundreds of billions of dollars over a decade in the form of estate tax breaks at a time when income and wealth inequality in this country are at historic highs. This transfer of wealth through estate tax repeal alone requires us to go back to the drawing board. On the other hand, the bill

raises taxes on 19.4 million households earning under \$200,000 by as much as \$500. Forty-six percent of households making under \$100,000 and 50 percent of households making under \$75,000 will either see their taxes go up over the next decade or see no change at all, and that is just the tip of the iceberg. While tax cuts for big corporations are made permanent, the Republican bill plans to claw back what little it gives to everyone else after a few years, setting up even bigger tax hikes for the middle class down the line. This does not even begin to cover the return of TrumpCare that has been added to this bill, which would take healthcare coverage away from 13 million Americans and drive up costs substantially for the poor, the sick, and the elderly.

This bill is a bad investment and, frankly, it is one we can ill afford. According to the Penn Wharton Budget Model provided by the University of Pennsylvania, the bill will reduce Federal revenue by as much as \$1.7 trillion and increase our national debt by \$2 trillion in the 10-year budget window. By 2040, this becomes \$3.6 trillion in lost Federal revenue and up to \$6.9 trillion in debt. We would take on all this debt for an estimated 0.4 to 0.9 percent boost in GDP. For \$1.5 trillion, we could make needed repairs to our streets and highways across America—creating tens of thousands of jobs in the process. We could pay off every American's credit card or student loan, or lift every American above the poverty line for years. Instead, this bill would put yet another massive charge on America's credit card that will not create jobs, will not trickle down, and most certainly will not pay for itself. We still have a \$5.6 trillion in deficits and interest payments from the Bush tax cuts to prove it. With over \$20 trillion in national debt, it is long past time to stop experimenting with people's lives and livelihoods to prove yet again there are no merits to supply-side economics. America has pressing needs and very real bills coming due.

Mr. President, I would like to spend the remaining time of my remarks addressing something about which we have heard far too little in this debate, and that is the impact on our national economic health of the unavoidable and compounding cost of 16 years of military conflict paid for almost entirely through debt. For the first time in our history, the United States reduced revenue—in the form of the Bush tax cuts—rather than the usual pay-as-you-go approach to financing the post-9/11 wars. While we debate potentially adding trillions of dollars to the debt for an ill-conceived tax bill, the costs of war are coming due.

According to calculations in the thorough report by the Costs of War Project by the Watson Institute at Brown University, “[e]ven if the U.S. stopped spending on war at the end of this fiscal year, interest costs alone on borrowing to pay for the wars will continue to grow apace . . . [f]uture inter-

est costs for overseas contingency operations spending alone are projected to add more than \$1 trillion to the national debt by 2023. By 2056, a conservative estimate is that the interest costs will be about \$8 trillion, unless the U.S. changes the way it pays for the wars.”

In a sense, what we are doing is mortgaging the future of our children and grandchildren as we continue to add debt, and this is unavoidable debt in so many cases. We know we cannot immediately stop our engagement in countries throughout the world—in Afghanistan, in the Middle East and other areas. And, frankly, we are facing tremendous challenges in the Korean Peninsula. The approximate combined President's budget request for the Departments of Defense, State, and USAID for fiscal year 2018 is \$14 billion for Iraq and Syria, and \$48.9 billion for Afghanistan.

Furthermore, these costs do not account for much needed maintenance and modernization of our military assets. For example, modernizing, operating, and sustaining our nuclear triad—which includes submarines, bombers, and ICBMs—is projected to cost \$1.2 trillion in 2017 dollars over the next 30 years. We are debating taking \$1.5 trillion and giving it to the wealthiest Americans when we know that we need an additional \$1.2 trillion over 30 years to secure the safety of the United States and the civility of the world through nuclear deterrence. This begs the very simple question: If we want to borrow \$1.5 trillion, why don't we invest it in a cost we know will come due—protecting our country and the world through the renovation and reinvigoration of our nuclear triad.

The Navy recently validated a requirement for 355 ships. This would require the Navy to purchase around 329 new ships over 30 years—an average cost of \$102 billion per year through 2047, which is 13 percent more than the \$90 billion needed to build and operate the current 254-ship fleet envisioned in the Navy's 2017 plan. Once again, we are committing ourselves to billions of dollars of costs to our Navy shipbuilding program while we are entertaining a 1.5 or more trillion-dollar tax giveaway to the wealthiest Americans. We know these costs are coming due, but we are fooling ourselves into thinking we can continue spending on credit forever.

We can expect even greater costs if our military increases end strength, as so many on both sides of the aisle are proposing. This is because of high operational tempo, which is not likely to diminish. For every additional 10,000 servicemembers, it costs roughly \$1.8 billion per year for pay and benefits, and to train and equip these personnel. If the Army grows to 580,000 personnel, it will cost an additional \$18 billion per year, but we are taking that money, and we are giving it in tax cuts, the prominent amount of which is going to the wealthiest Americans. We are not

investing it now in increasing our military forces. If the Air Force grows by 30,000 personnel, it will cost an additional \$6 billion per year. If the Marine Corps grows by 20,000 personnel, it will cost an additional \$3.6 billion per year. If you talk to the Commandant or Chief of Staff of the Air Force, they will tell you they have to increase the size of their force because of the operational tempo. Indeed, if you talk to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, he will tell you they are in a desperate situation maintaining sufficient pilots to fly our aircraft. So we could be buying hundreds of new F-35 aircraft at a significant cost and watch them parked because we can't afford the flight crews to fly them and to maintain them. We know these costs are coming, and we are ignoring them until they come due. We are ignoring them now for the benefit of these tax cuts.

If we do not chart a responsible path forward on economic policy, we will leave all these costs to the next generation, to the detriment of our children, our national security, and our position of world leadership. Frankly, it might not be even that long before serious issues materialize. Once the markets determine that \$1.5 trillion is just a small fraction of what we still must pay to protect ourselves; to continue our commitment in Afghanistan, to continue to support allies across the globe, markets may learn very quickly that the deficit is beginning to devour us. The markets will react, as they have in the past. So we could see a serious problem long before even our children confront these debts.

That is why earlier today former Secretaries of Defense Leon Panetta, Chuck Hagel, and Ash Carter sent a letter to congressional leadership and the House and Senate Armed Services Committee leadership that warned us that the fiscal irresponsibility of the Republican tax proposal will contribute to a growing budget crisis. The letter urges Congress to instead address the sequester that threatens to “hollow out” our military's ability to sustain the commitments of its global missions.

Mr. President, tax policies have real consequences. We can debate the value of one tax proposal over another, but that is not the debate before us. The simple facts are that this tax bill will give breaks to the people who need them the least, take money from working Americans, leave millions of Americans sicker and worse off, and further strain our ability to keep America safe from growing and changing threats across the globe. It also threatens expenditures on healthcare, education, infrastructure, and other vital domestic needs as the debt balloons due to this bill's unaffordable tax breaks for corporate titans. This is not what we owe the next generation. It is not even what we owe our children today. I urge my colleagues across the aisle to consider our Nation's future and join us in opposing this legislation.

Like so many here, I was here in 2001 when President George W. Bush proposed his tax cuts, which I opposed, and assured us that our economy would grow, that jobs would multiply, that we would be fine. Let me remind my colleagues that he said this after we had made the tough decisions in the Clinton Administration that led to a projected surplus in the billions of dollars. The mantra from many people at the time was, let's give the money back to the American people.

We don't have a surplus today. We have a significant deficit. It will grow with this bill because this bill says that we are going to increase it by \$1.5 trillion at a minimum, and it will not be just \$1.5 trillion.

I suggest that, unless we abandon our commitments to the men and women of our Armed Forces, unless we decide to disengage from the deterrent that we must have to defend the Nation from a nuclear Armageddon, unless we decide to leave Afghanistan—after the President announced that no longer are we basing our decisions on time but on conditions—there will continue to be trillions and trillions of dollars of unavoidable costs that should be included in this debate.

This is not the time to take trillions of dollars and give a disproportionate share to the wealthiest Americans. This is the time for us to work together, to provide the resources for our military, to provide investments for our people, and to deal with the issue of inequality between the wealthiest 1 percent and everybody else. None of that is accomplished by this bill. In fact, this bill will complicate, compound, and make even more difficult the problems we face in defending the Nation and giving people a chance at having better futures.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

BLUE SLIPS AND THE NOMINATIONS OF DAVID STRAS AND KYLE DUNCAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, earlier this week, I spoke about the history of the blue-slip courtesy. I hope my colleagues will read that history as well. I explained in that speech earlier this week that in my nearly four decades in the Senate, I have regularly returned my blue slip even when I would have preferred that the President had nominated someone else.

Today, I am announcing that the Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing for two circuit court nominees, each of whom has one home State Senator who has not returned a blue slip containing a positive endorsement.

The hearing for Justice David Stras, nominee to the Eighth Circuit, and Kyle Duncan, nominee to the Fifth Circuit, will take place on November 29. Both of these nominees appear to be very well qualified, and they deserve the Judiciary Committee's further consideration. I would therefore like to offer an explanation as to why I am choosing to proceed on these nomina-

tions and allow the hearing despite the lack of two positive blue slips.

As I explained earlier this week, the blue-slip courtesy is just that—a courtesy. For 100 years, the Judiciary Committee chairmen have asked for the views of home State Senators on judicial nominees via the blue-slip process. The blue slip is meant to solicit insights into nominees and ensure that the White House is adequately consulting with home State Senators as the advice part of the advice and consent would apply.

Let me be very clear. I will maintain the blue-slip courtesy, but some of my Democratic colleagues and leftwing outside groups mistakenly assert that the blue slip affords a home State Senator veto power over a nominee. That is not true. Only 2 out of the 18 previous chairmen of this committee in the last 100 years allowed a single Senator to wield veto power over a nominee.

Senator Joe Biden, when he was the Judiciary Committee chairman, articulated what I consider to be a sensible policy with regard to the blue slip. He said that a negative blue slip will be a "significant factor" for the committee to weigh, but "it will not preclude consideration of a nominee" unless the administration were to fail to consult with the Senator. I intend to follow this practice for negative and unreturned blue slips. This practice is consistent with the vast majority of the blue slip's history.

I will add that I am less likely to proceed on a district court nominee who does not have two positive blue slips from home State Senators, but circuit courts, as we know, cover multiple States. There is less reason to defer to the views of a single State's Senator for such nominees when that nominee is going to serve several States in a circuit.

It is important to remember that the judicial confirmation process has changed over the last several years. Previously, when home State Senators did not return a positive blue slip, their colleagues often defeated that very same nomination on the floor but not in committee.

When President Bush nominated Carolyn Kuhl to the Ninth Circuit, her home State Senators did not return positive blue slips. Chairman HATCH, nevertheless, held a hearing and a vote for that nominee. Her home State Senators, however, convinced their colleagues to filibuster the nominee on the Senate floor. Carolyn Kuhl was never confirmed.

A few years ago, as we know—I think it was in 2013—Democrats abolished the filibuster for nominees to the lower courts. They argued that a minority of Senators should not be allowed to block nominees who had majority support.

Our colleague, the Senator from Oregon, said: "'Advice and consent' was never envisioned as a check that involved a minority of the Senate being

able to block a Presidential [nomination]." Well, now that Senator is withholding his blue slip for a nominee to the Ninth Circuit. If he did not believe that 41 Senators should be able to block a nominee, he surely wouldn't believe that a single Senator would have that right.

I think the Democrats now seriously regret that they abolished the filibuster, as I warned them about at that particular time when they were trying to add a lot of people who were not needed on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, as an example—packing the court, in other words. They cannot veto it because there is not a filibuster, so they want to use the blue slip for that purpose. It is very clear from the history of the blue slip that that is not what the blue slip was meant for.

On the other hand, some have argued that the blue-slip courtesy has no place in modern judicial confirmations. The LA Times recently suggested getting rid of the blue slip, as did the New York Times several years ago. Even our committee's ranking member, Senator FEINSTEIN, once advocated for abolishing the blue slip.

I disagree that we should abolish the blue slip. The blue slip serves the important purpose of encouraging consultation between the White House and the Senate. Otherwise, the constitutional provision of advice and consent is just consent. But there is opportunity to advise ahead of time. That is what the blue slips help to do. The blue slip serves the important purpose of encouraging consultation between the White House and the Senate. The White House has an obligation to engage in good-faith consultation with home State Senators for the purpose of advice.

I will not allow the White House to just steamroll home State Senators, but, as I have said all along, I will not allow the blue-slip process to be abused. Ever since last November, when the press had asked me about the blue slip, I have said that we are going to honor the blue-slip process but that there are always exceptions. I am not going to allow Senators to prevent a committee hearing for political or ideological reasons. Those are the least reasons not to have a hearing. Using the blue slip for these purposes is not consistent with historical practice.

This brings me to one of the two nominations we are having on November 29, that of Justice David Stras of Minnesota.

Justice Stras appears to be exceptionally well qualified. He graduated first in his class from the University of Kansas Law School. He clerked for both the Ninth Circuit and the Fourth Circuit and then for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. After several years in private practice in Minnesota, Justice Stras joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota Law School. He remained there until his appointment to the Minnesota Supreme Court in 2010. In 2012, he was

elected to a full 6-year term on the court by 56 percent of Minnesota voters. Think about one's not returning a blue slip when somebody gets 56 percent of the vote to be returned to the court.

Justice Stras was raised by a single mother in Kansas. He is the grandson of Holocaust survivors. He carries the lessons passed down by his grandparents with him each day.

I want to refer to a writing he just submitted to a leading newspaper. Writing recently about their survival in Auschwitz and then immigrating to the United States, he recalled that his grandfather had "the uncommon gift of being able to see the light of human generosity in the midst of near-total darkness."

He wrote that his grandparents embraced "a message of optimism, intended to ensure that their children and grandchildren were able to lead a life free from the atrocities that they had witnessed."

Justice Stras has an impeccable reputation in the Minnesota legal community.

His former colleagues at the University of Minnesota Law School describe him as a person who "engaged in debate respectfully, listening to opposing ideas while backing up his own views with facts and arguments" and who "wanted our students to be exposed to a wide range of beliefs."

Another group of colleagues of Justice Stras from his days in private practice describe this justice as the type of attorney who "never talked down to people" and "there was never any hint that he felt himself superior to anyone." Instead, Justice Stras "listened to others' views, and worked to find an approach to legal problems that was both effective and acceptable to everyone on the team." They also note in that letter his dedication to mentoring young lawyers.

Despite these accomplishments and accolades, one Senator has withheld his blue slip. Evidently, my colleague from Minnesota believes that Justice Stras has not even earned a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee. But the reasons given for withholding the blue slip are not consistent with the blue slip's purposes and history.

Justice Stras was nominated to the Eighth Circuit on May 8, more than 6 months ago. After many months, my colleague formally announced that he would not return a blue slip. He cited Justice Stras's "deeply conservative judicial philosophy," as well as his admiration for Justice Thomas and Justice Scalia. To me, this amounts to an ideological litmus test: Admirers of Justice Thomas and Justice Scalia need not ever apply for being on a circuit court.

The Minnesota StarTribune's editorial board summed it up. They said the Senator from Minnesota "rejected Stras for one reason: the justice's conservative views."

The editorial board of the largest newspaper in Minnesota echoed the retired justice, Paul Anderson:

While Stras is more conservative than I would like, that is not the point. The question is whether Stras is qualified to serve on the Eighth Circuit. And he is.

My colleague later claimed that he was not adequately consulted by the White House, which would be a legitimate reason for withholding a blue slip, as I hope I have implied several times during my remarks today and before. So I looked into this by reviewing the records of consultation—and thank God the White House keeps pretty good records. It is clear the White House earnestly and repeatedly attempted to work with both home State Senators. The White House reached out to my colleague from Minnesota several times between January and May of this year to discuss the Eighth Circuit vacancy that Minnesota supplies a member for.

It wasn't until May 2 that my colleague suggested alternatives to Justice Stras. That was more than 3 months after initial contact by the White House. Nevertheless, the White House did what they should under the Constitution by listening to Senators. They considered my colleague's two suggested nominees. I am satisfied that the White House adequately tried to consult with both home State Senators as the Constitution requires under advice and consent. Therefore, I am not going to deny Justice Stras a hearing.

I would like to say a brief word about Justice Stras's supposedly rigid conservative views. The Judiciary Committee has received numerous letters attesting to Justice Stras's intellectual honesty and, probably more importantly, open-mindedness. It is clear that he has great respect for the rule of law, and his tenure on the Minnesota Supreme Court demonstrates that, like any good judge, he is able to put aside his personal views and apply the law faithfully.

One letter, written by a bipartisan group of attorneys from Justice Stras's former firm, noted that they "never doubted for a minute that he reached his decisions based on his well-considered view of the law, and not personal, political, or ideological considerations."

They went on to note:

The lawyers whose names appear at the bottom of this letter span the political spectrum, from Democrat to Republican, liberal to conservative. We differ in our political views, but we are united in our support of Justice Stras's nomination to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

There are all kinds of people writing that letter—Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives. Why is a Senator concerned about the justice's ideological views when people who know him well seem to think that is not a consideration because he is going to make a good judge?

A group of former colleagues at the University of Minnesota agree. They

wrote a letter to the committee stating:

We are Minnesota law professors with diverse political views ranging from very conservative to very progressive. Some of us have appeared before Justice Stras as advocates, and all of us are familiar with his academic and judicial track records.

Now as I continue the quote, I want to say to everybody, get this:

He is no extremist, and he has approached his academic and judicial work without bias or favoritism.

This support is echoed by his colleagues in my State of Iowa. The committee has received several letters of support from the faculty at the University of Iowa College of Law where Justice Stras teaches as an adjunct professor. Among his supporters are the dean of the law school, Gail Agrawal, and Professor Sheldon Kurtz, a self-described "life-long liberal."

Justice Stras is a widely respected jurist, and he should have a hearing. Ideological differences should not prevent the committee from moving forward.

I would also like to address my decision to hold a hearing for Kyle Duncan, a nominee for the Fifth Circuit. He also has not had two positive blue slips returned. He is a widely respected appellate lawyer who has litigated over 30 cases in Federal and State appellate courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

My friend and colleague, Senator KENNEDY of Louisiana, has declined to return a positive blue slip. However, Senator KENNEDY expressed that while he is undecided on Mr. Duncan's nomination, he does not oppose a hearing for Mr. Duncan. This seems to me to be a very sensible approach. It is the correct distinction that a Senator should make when deciding whether to return a blue slip. The blue slip is not meant to signify the Senator's ultimate support or opposition to the nominee. It only expresses a Senator's view about whether the nominee should have a hearing.

Senator FEINSTEIN made this precise distinction in 2003 for Carolyn Kuhl's nomination. I referred to that nomination earlier in my remarks. Senator FEINSTEIN returned a blue slip which noted that she "reserved judgment" on Carolyn Kuhl. She also supported holding a hearing for Judge Kuhl. Ultimately, after Judge Kuhl's hearing, Senator FEINSTEIN decided to oppose confirmation.

Evidently, the hearing served a useful purpose, and Senator FEINSTEIN was able to distinguish between allowing a hearing and supporting a nominee. Senator KENNEDY has shown that he understands this distinction as well.

I look forward to hearing from Justice Stras and Mr. Duncan at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on November 29.

I think that all 100 Senators ought to look at the advice and consent clause. We have an opportunity to give advice to a President. We have an opportunity then, if that nominee comes up here, to vote for that nominee.

Do we want to preserve the “advice” part of advice and consent? If we do, I would suggest that we look at the blue slip as a useful tool for accomplishing a very important part of the process. If it is abused—at least while I am chairman, you don’t have to worry about it going away. But if it is abused, someday it will go away, and then all we are going to have, when it is all said and done, is consent.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the excellent remarks of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, outlining the history of the blue slip. I am going to say to the chairman that he has outlined a sensible use of the blue slip, which involves consultation but does not lead to a one-Senator veto of a nominee.

I thank the chairman for the history lesson. It is a history lesson that the Senate needed to hear.

I also thank the chairman for the spectacular job that he has done all year long with this new administration in processing and bringing forward highly qualified nominees. For generations to come, Americans who follow the third branch will be indebted to the chairman for the way he has handled these nominations, processed them, moved them out on to the floor, and given the Senate the opportunity to express its will.

I wish every Member of the Senate had been able to hear the chairman’s remarks, but I am certainly going to call these remarks to the attention of our Members every opportunity I get, and I thank the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank the leader.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the National Defense Authorization Act. The process of negotiating the annual defense bill is one that has a long and important history on Capitol Hill.

This afternoon, the Senate voted to pass a conference report, continuing a tradition of 55 consecutive years in which the National Defense Authorization Act has been a must-pass bill for the Congress. People have a habit these days of assuming that Congress cannot pass major legislation, but this bill is a testament to the fact that when it comes to supporting our men and women in uniform, we work together to provide them with the support they need. I am happy to say that this year, we are carrying on this proud tradition.

This year’s National Defense Authorization Act was passed by overwhelming bipartisan majorities in both the Senate and the House. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have been proud to do my part to help craft this bill and to be a part of the process.

We live in a rapidly changing world, and, unfortunately, one that presents a

growing number of threats and challenges that our military must face. Across the globe, we have witnessed the rise of dangerous new threats that make the mission of our warfighters even more challenging. In Europe, Vladimir Putin has shown a complete disregard for international law and order and threatens key allies and democracies that underpin the democratic backbone of Europe. In the Pacific, we face a nuclear-armed dictator in North Korea who murders his own people while threatening mass death and destruction to the United States and to our allies. In the Middle East, we have witnessed the rapid and fearsome emergence of radical extremist groups like ISIS, whose barbarism shocks the world. Their horrific acts of bloodshed show just how dangerous this warped ideology is, and the efforts of the men and women in uniform have played a critical role in the fight to stem this dark tide.

Unfortunately, this same ideology of radical extremism is finding new followers in Europe, Africa, and Asia. These threats demand that we be ready. The fact is that the United States has faced challenges before, and if one thing holds true throughout history, it is that our Armed Forces will be called upon to defeat the enemies of freedom and safeguard this Nation. For them to succeed, the Congress must provide the men and women in uniform the support they need to execute their missions. That is why I am so proud to stand before you today and speak about the National Defense Authorization Act.

This legislation sends a clear message: Now is the time that we begin to rebuild our military. Contained in this bill is the necessary funding to start filling the gaps and ensuring our force remains the best in the world. This includes increases to the size of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Reserves, and our National Guard. It also means that new, battle-ready systems are going to get the funding they need to be put in the field as quickly as possible. On land, the NDAA authorizes funding for 85 Abrams tank upgrades and 93 Bradley fighting vehicles. At sea, it revitalizes our fleet, authorizing 13 new ships for our Navy. In the air, it provides 90 new F-35 aircraft and 53 UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters.

Across all of these domains, the fiscal year 2018 NDAA authorizes funding for critical modernization priorities to help ensure that on every battlefield the men and women of America’s Armed Forces have the resources they need to complete the missions they are given.

I serve as chair of the Armed Services Committee’s Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, and my top priority has been the modernization of our nuclear forces and the Department of Energy’s nuclear weapons complex.

This bill strongly supports nuclear modernization and makes a number of other key investments within the sub-

committee’s jurisdiction. First, the conference report builds on important provisions included in the versions that passed both the House and the Senate this year, and it includes the administration’s request for additional missile defense funding, submitted earlier this month. In total, the bill authorizes an additional \$4.4 billion above the level requested by the President when the budget was initially submitted to improve our missile defense systems. This includes a significant expansion of our Ground-based Midcourse Defense system and authorizes resources to begin construction of another 20 interceptor silos at Fort Greely, AK. To further enhance the system’s effectiveness, the bill makes valuable investments in the network of radars and other sensors that support the system’s operations. The bill also contains reasonable reforms to our military space enterprise that are designed to achieve a more streamlined and agile system that is more responsive to the needs of our warfighters.

Furthermore, the bill improves the oversight and management of our nuclear command and control architecture. Often overlooked, these programs form the connective tissue between our national leadership and our nuclear forces. Their reliability and resilience are vital to the effectiveness of our nuclear deterrent.

As the specter of great power conflict returns and the threat from a nuclear-armed North Korea continues to grow, our missile defense and nuclear capabilities will play an increasingly important role in protecting our homeland. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to further modernize and strengthen these vital capabilities to ensure that we stay ahead of the threats that our Nation faces.

Beyond the strategic forces portfolio, this bill recognizes that we must also rebuild our readiness and military infrastructure here at home, which is why we have included funding increases in the bill to support 90 percent of the requirements for facilities sustainment, as well as a significant increase for facilities restoration and modernization. This means newly authorized funding to restore and modernize facilities and infrastructure ranging from barracks and hospitals to runways and hangers.

But let’s not forget the most important part of our effort in crafting this bill, and that is providing for the one asset we can never replace: our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. The people who wear the uniform are more valuable than any weapons system. The dedication, sacrifice, and honor they exemplify every day is why we stand here today and enjoy the freedoms this country has to offer. For that reason, included in this bill is the largest pay raise for our troops in 8 years.

We have also permanently preserved special survivor indemnity allowance

payments to surviving military spouses. There are more than 60,000 Americans whose spouses have died on Active Duty or during retirement and, as a result of this legislation, this important payment will no longer exist on a year-by-year basis, but it will be preserved indefinitely.

Make no mistake, these are challenging times for our Nation as the world is becoming an increasingly complex place. Now more than ever, we are asking our military to tackle difficult problems and to face adversaries who consistently seek new ways to do us harm.

No matter the day, no matter the situation, America's Armed Forces stand ready to answer the call and protect our Nation. We need to uphold our solemn duty as Members of the Senate and keep faith with those who wear the uniform by giving them the tools they need.

The 55-year legacy of passing the National Defense Authorization Act did not happen by accident. It has happened because Members of this body know and Members of this body recognize that this bill represents a promise to our servicemembers. It is a promise that, as you stand in harm's way, far from your families and loved ones, we stand with you. When you are deployed during a holiday or a special occasion, as many members of our own Nebraska National Guard will be this Thanksgiving, we stand with you. During late nights and early mornings in the cold, in the heat, in battle, and in peacetime, we stand with you.

Passing the National Defense Authorization Act means keeping our end of the promise to those who serve. As a Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, it has been my honor to play a part in helping to craft this year's bill, and I would like to thank our chairman, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, for his leadership in guiding the committee through the process. I would also like to thank America's men and women in uniform for all that they do to keep us safe.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, the consideration of Federal judges with lifetime appointments is perhaps the most important and long-lasting work this body will do between now and the end of the year.

Every Senator—Republican and Democrat—took an oath to perform this duty. Nobody took an oath to outsource this duty to any outside organization. Unfortunately, some of my

colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee are apparently willing to hand over their voting cards to the American Bar Association, based on the claim that the ABA is an unbiased, indifferent umpire that just calls balls and strikes.

The American Bar Association is not neutral. The ABA is a liberal organization that has publicly and consistently advocated for left-of-center positions for more than two decades now. The ABA has no right to special treatment by Members of this body.

It is pretty simple. If you are playing in the game, you don't get to cherry-pick who the referees are.

Take, for just a moment, a look at the amicus briefs they have filed in recent years.

In the District of Columbia v. Heller, the ABA supported denying an individual their constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

In Christian Legal Society v. Martinez, the ABA supported forcing Christian organizations on campuses to accept members that reject their faith.

In Medellin v. Texas, the ABA supported forcing States to recognize the judgments of the world court in order to stop the execution of a gruesome murderer.

In United States v. Windsor, the ABA supported the recognition of same-sex marriage through judicial fiat rather than through legislative debate.

In Arizona v. United States, the ABA supported a constitutional ban on State and local law enforcement assisting in enforcing Federal immigration laws.

The list goes on. In each of these cases, the ABA decided to weigh into divisive and contentious issues. This is their right, indeed, but it is definitely not neutral. In each of these cases, and many more, the ABA took what can only be described as a left-of-center position. In each of these cases, the ABA was picking a side.

Again—to be clear—they are absolutely allowed to do this. It is what makes this country great. But it is laughably naive to suggest that they are an objective and neutral organization. They are not.

The ABA cannot make liberal arguments to the nine members of the Supreme Court, and then walk across the street and seriously expect that the 100 Members of this body in the Senate will be treating them like unbiased appraisers. That is essentially what Attorney General Bill Barr said in 1992 when the ABA first began to openly take pro-abortion positions—which, by the way, led to thousands of members quitting in protest because those members knew that the ABA claims to neutrality about political issues were no longer even possibly defensible.

Then—U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr commented on the ABA's pro-abortion advocacy at the time by saying: "By adopting the resolution and thereby endorsing one side of this debate, the ABA will endanger the perception that

it is an impartial and objective association."

Twenty-five years later, Barr's words were right. His words ring true.

Again, I want to be perfectly clear. The ABA is allowed to have any view that its members want to have, and they are allowed to advocate and to protest on behalf of those views and on behalf of their members. This is America, and that is exactly what the First Amendment is about. That is fine. But what is not fine is that the ABA, which is a liberal advocacy organization, would masquerade as a neutral and objective evaluator of judicial candidates.

The ABA cannot take blatantly liberal positions on the one hand, and then masquerade as a neutral party on the other, and then demand a special seat at the table in the Senate Judiciary Committee and in the Senate—in this body—to try to tell us who is and isn't supposedly qualified to be a judge.

Just as the ABA has every right to advance its liberal policy positions, every Senator has the right—and indeed, the duty—to give our advice and consent on judicial nominees. If Senators decide that they like and value the ABA's policy positions and they like and value the ABA's rating, they are free to give them due deference and consideration, but don't hide behind it.

Don't pretend that the ABA is something that it is not. Do not ignore the facts of what the ABA has become. The American people deserve honesty, not thinly veiled partisanship.

Thank you.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

After several months of negotiations, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees have arrived at a completed conference agreement. Earlier today, we passed the NDAA for the 56th consecutive year.

Let me highlight some of the important issues that we addressed in this agreement. This conference agreement authorizes a total of \$692 billion, which includes \$626.4 billion in base budget funding for the Department of Defense and certain security activities of the Department of Energy and \$65.8 billion in overseas contingency operations, or OCO, funding.

Of course, we could not have done it without the cooperation of all the members of the committee, including the Presiding Officer, and I thank him for his contribution and his service.

This includes the administration's \$5.9 billion budget amendment we received earlier this month, which seeks an additional \$4.7 billion in base budget funding to bolster missile defense and to repair two Navy ships after recent collisions, as well as \$1.2 billion in OCO funding for operations in Afghanistan and for additional capabilities in the Central Command area of operations.

The conference agreement includes significant increases in additional resources aimed at restoring full spectrum readiness, as soon as possible, across the military services. Specifically, operation and maintenance funding, widely known as the lifeblood readiness, was increased by \$1.16 billion for the Army, \$277.9 million for the Navy, \$82.3 million for the Marine Corps, and \$1 billion for the U.S. Air Force.

This conference agreement supports the topline of \$700 billion for national defense, or 050, activities, which is roughly \$150 billion over the Budget Control Act cap. If the cap is not adjusted and if this amount is fully funded by the appropriators, then we would trigger the harmful across-the-board cuts of sequestration, just at the time when we are trying to restore readiness.

I want to be clear. I agree that the DOD needs additional resources. But we must address the caps for both defense and nondefense activities.

I remind my colleagues that under the Budget Control Act, or BCA, national defense activities include certain programs at the FBI and the Coast Guard, while nondefense activities include the State Department, veterans' care, Customs and Border Protection, and the TSA. We need to look at our Nation's needs holistically, and we must remain vigilant over the amount of money the DOD can effectively utilize. We have to look at national security, and that includes both sides and both caps.

With regard to our overseas operations, the conference report authorizes the entirety of the funding request for our efforts in Afghanistan, including \$1.7 billion to invest in critical aviation capabilities, such as close air support platforms and modernized rotary wing assets, and to continue to sustain and train the existing fleet.

The report also authorizes 3,500 special immigrant visas to continue to uphold our commitments to the many brave Afghans who have provided critical support to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. In this regard, let me thank Chairman MCCAIN and Senator SHAHEEN, without whose efforts this provision would not have been included, I believe, in the final conference.

The conference report continues robust support for our counterterrorism efforts against ISIS, al-Qaida, and the other violent extremist groups, including approximately \$1.8 billion for the Train and Equip Programs in Iraq and Syria. It also fully funds the Department's budget request for U.S. Special Operations Command.

With this bill, we will enhance public transparency and congressional oversight of military operations and the policies that underpin them. Most notably, it requires a public articulation of the legal and policy frameworks governing the use of military force outside of declared war zones, as well as additional reporting on civilian casualty

incidents and DOD efforts to prevent them.

The conference report includes a requirement for the Secretary of Defense to appoint a senior official in the Department to lead an effort to harness and integrate all of the Department's capabilities to confront and defeat the kind of strategic influence operations that Russia has conducted against us and our allies over the last 2 years. It is vital that the Defense Department integrate its cyber capabilities with its information warfare experts to provide capabilities and options in time for next year's election cycle in the United States and to support our allies in Europe against Russian operations directed against them.

Additionally, the conference report includes a requirement for the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State to develop and report to Congress on a comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy to counter the Russian malign influence threat. Such a detailed strategy must include measures to defend against and deter Russian activities related to national security, including hybrid warfare, cyber attacks, and information operations.

The 2018 NDAA also authorizes the Secretary of Defense to establish the Indo-Asia-Pacific Stability Initiative, which will be used to improve our posture in the Asia-Pacific region and provide additional resources to increase partner capacity and multilateral exercises in the region.

The Chief of Naval Operations' Force Structure Assessment from last winter identified a goal of 355 ships, including 66 attack submarines. This bill makes a good downpayment on that goal by adding five ships to the budget, including one DDG-51 destroyer, two littoral combat ships, one LX(R) amphibious ship, and one expeditionary sea base.

Perhaps not as dramatic, but no less important, is the addition of \$698 million in the budget request to allow the Navy to begin expanding the submarine industrial base. Achieving the CNO's force structure goal will require adding 18 attack submarines to the previous force structure goal of 48 boats.

This will be no small challenge since retirement of older submarines will exceed deliveries of new submarines. During the 10-year period of 1991 to 2000, we ordered only four attack submarines—Connecticut, Jimmy Carter, Virginia, and Texas—so we have to do some catching up.

Providing the resources for the Navy to expand the submarine industrial base in an orderly fashion will be a critical element of efficiency and a critical element in building up our fleet.

The conference fully supports the budget requests for the modernization of the triad and its nuclear command and control to ensure we can deter existential threats to our homeland. Our triad of submarines, ICBMs, and bombers have been in service for decades and must be replaced.

Secretary Ash Carter put the situation eloquently when he said that a failure to do so, in his words, "would mean losing confidence in our ability to deter, which we can't afford in today's volatile security environment."

In the area of technology and acquisition, I am pleased that this bill shows strong support for the Department's network of labs and test ranges, which help drive efforts to maintain our battlefield technological superiority. In particular, I think this bill makes significant strides in enabling DOD to develop and buy the modern software and IT systems that are integral to every system, platform, and business system in the Department of Defense. Additionally, it reauthorizes the Defense Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research to expand the number of universities capable of working with the Pentagon on advanced research.

The bill also pushes DOD to make use of advanced "Big Data" techniques to manage its business functions and processes. New ways of collecting, analyzing, and applying the lessons of data are revolutionizing the commercial world. It is time that DOD applied these same techniques to lower costs and save money and time.

The conference report also includes a provision that would allow the Army to transfer all excess firearms no longer actively issued for military service to an organic facility for the purpose of melting and repurposing. This provision not only allows the Army to divest itself of these weapons, but it will also provide a steady stream of work to our organic foundries. These are an important part of our arsenal system.

Furthermore, the provision will authorize the Secretary of the Army to annually designate additional excess firearms that are no longer in military use to be repurposed. This common-sense approach will allow the Army to save money on storage costs, as well as repurposing these excess weapons for higher priority needs identified by the Army.

I am also pleased that the conference report builds on a markup amendment by Senator NELSON that directs the Department to conduct a threat assessment and deliver a master plan for climate change adaptation.

The conference report includes House language from my colleague Congressman JIM LANGEVIN that codifies several findings related to climate change and expresses the sense of Congress that climate change is a threat to our national security.

In the area of military personnel, the conference agreement accomplishes much on behalf of our servicemembers and the Department of Defense. The bill authorizes a 2.4-percent across-the-board pay raise for our troops and extends authority to pay over 30 bonuses and special pays to encourage recruitment, retention, and continued services.

It also includes authority for service Secretaries to extend by an additional year the time that the recruits may remain in the Delayed Entry Program to ensure that background checks are completed, so that they are not unnecessarily separated due to the fault of government. These are individuals who are here illegally. Their status is a result of their joining the MAVNI Program. If this program were terminated, we would lose their service to our military forces and they would be forced to leave the country.

Additionally, the bill permanently extends the special survivor indemnity allowance under the Survivor Benefit Plan, which was due to expire early next year. This ensures that widows of our veterans and servicemembers who die of service-connected causes will continue to receive their monthly benefit and authorizes annual cost-of-living adjustments to this benefit going forward.

With regard to military family care, the report authorizes \$50 million for impact aid, including \$40 million in supplemental impact aid and \$10 million—twice the usual amount—for military children with severe disabilities. For military families and for local school systems all across this country, this impact aid is absolutely essential. Furthermore, it requires the Department to improve pediatric care and related services for children of members of the military.

This bill will also improve military family readiness by addressing the shortage of qualified childcare workers, requiring that the realities of military life be considered in setting the operating hours of childcare centers, and by increasing flexibility for families when the military requires them to move.

Let me conclude by stating the obvious. The reason this bill passed was because of the extraordinary bipartisan leadership of Senator JOHN MCCAIN and also because of the extraordinary bipartisan leadership of Chairman MAC THORNBERRY of the House Armed Services Committee and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH. I look forward to working with them in the future.

Finally, the conference agreement would not have been possible without the hard work of the entire committee staff, who worked diligently to help finalize this agreement. I thank Chris Brose, Eric Swabb, and all the majority committee staff for their hard work this past year. On the minority side, I thank my staff director, Elizabeth King. I also thank Gary Leeling, Creighton Greene, Carolyn Chuhta, Maggie McNamara, Jonathan Clark, Jonathan Epstein, Jorie Feldman, Ozge Guzelsu, Jody Bennett, Kirk McConnell, Bill Monahan, Mike Noblet, John Quirk, Arun Seraphin, and Jon Green.

Let me state the obvious: They do the work. Sometimes we get the credit, but the work is theirs. I am deeply appreciative of all of their efforts.

Again, let me indicate what is obvious to all our colleagues. Without the

inspirational, practical, dynamic, and unrelenting leadership of Chairman MCCAIN, we would not be at this moment today—the 56th consecutive passage of the National Defense Authorization Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, before addressing the topic that I want to take up—and I know it is one that is near and dear to the Presiding Officer's heart—which is rural healthcare, I want to express my admiration and thanks to Senator REED, the Senator from Rhode Island, and Senator MCCAIN for their incredible leadership of the Armed Services Committee. They show us what it is like to lead. They show us what it is like to take on difficult issues and to work out difficult problems, and I would like to express my appreciation to them for that.

I see the Senator—

Mr. SASSE. Will the Senator from Maine yield for 30 seconds?

Mr. KING. Absolutely.

Mr. SASSE. I would just like to associate myself with your comments, sir, in praising the ranking member.

Senator REED went through a long list of people who have gotten the NDAA across the finish line for more than half a century in a row.

As a newbie rookie in this body, I have to say that serving with the two of you on the Armed Services Committee is a real privilege and honor. Much of the body doesn't work very well right now, but that committee works incredibly well.

So I want to agree with the Senator from Maine that the ranking member is a huge part of why the Armed Services Committee works so well.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. KING. I thank the Senator.

I say to Senator REED, I appreciate your leadership.

Mr. REED. I thank the Senator from Maine and the Senator from the great State of Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. I thought you were buying time.

Mr. REED. No. Once again, we have been following Senator MCCAIN, and he took us all the way. Thank you.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I did a mathematic calculation a couple of years ago, and it resulted in an interesting conclusion. The Senate is a rural body. Eighteen Members of the U.S. Senate represent a majority of Americans. That means 82 percent—or 82 out of 100 Senators—represent smaller States, more rural communities.

Today, I want to talk about a disastrous development that is headed for our rural communities that we have the capability to fix, and it is one we should fix sooner rather than later. I am talking about Federal funding for federally qualified health centers, which expired on October 1. Seventy percent of the funding for the FQHCs expired on October 1. One hundred per-

cent of the National Health Service Corps funding expired on October 1.

These are vital programs that serve rural America and provide incredibly important healthcare services. They are an overlooked part of our national healthcare system, in part because they are traditionally in rural and out-back locations.

In Maine, we have 20 centers and 70 facilities scattered all over our State, and they are providing services every day to over 200,000 people. This is a vital part of our healthcare system. Yet the funding expired at the end of September, and so far nothing has been done.

How important is it? In Maine, there are 1,700 employees at these facilities; a total economic impact of over \$300 million a year; \$8 million in State and local tax revenue and \$32 million in Federal tax revenue. They provide \$16 million worth of uncompensated care that goes to Maine people who need the help. They are efficient. In Maine, they have saved Medicaid over \$100 million, and \$257 million is the estimate for what they have saved the overall healthcare system. Again, FQHCs provide 1,700 jobs and support another 1,000 jobs in their communities.

But this isn't only about economics and economic development and jobs; it is about healthcare. One in six people in Maine gets their healthcare from FQHCs—210,000 people. They accept everybody who comes to their door. I have been to them all over the State. They use a sliding-fee scale for people who are low income, who don't have insurance, and they provide all manner of services. It depends on the center; different centers have different services. They have medical, behavioral health, dental, substance abuse treatment and support, case management, optometry, podiatry, OB/GYN, prescription assistance, outreach and enrollment, pharmacy, radiology, and school-based healthcare services. These are the healthcare providers for rural America. And it is not only Maine; it is across the country. There are 10,000 sites across the United States. Some 26 million patients are at risk.

Well, what is the big deal? The big deal is that people are going to lose their healthcare services. We estimate that in Maine, we are going to lose about 400 clinicians and administrative and support staff who will have to be laid off at the beginning of the year unless we solve this problem in the immediate future. At least 25 of these sites will be forced to close, and we believe there will be almost 30,000 Maine residents who will lose access to their healthcare system.

Most of the FQHCs—federally qualified health centers—are getting by on their funding from last year, so the expiration of the funding hasn't hit them yet, but it will begin to hit them on January 1. That is what we have to respond to.

It is also already having an effect just by creating uncertainty. I got an

impassioned letter from the leader of one of our centers in Maine about the fact that they have been very diligently recruiting a dentist to come to their community. Dentists are very hard to come by in rural America. They had one who was ready to come, and then suddenly they heard about the uncertainty surrounding the funding—that it may or may not come through—and that dentist is now reconsidering their decision to go to this Maine community. That is a tragedy. That is a tragedy for the people of that town, where these services are literally not available.

So what does it matter? It matters because we are talking about people losing their healthcare services.

This has never been a partisan issue. I don't think there is a heck of a lot of debate around here about the importance of FQHCs and that we need to get them refunded. In fact, the Presiding Officer and Senator STABENOW have sponsored a bill, the CHIME Act, that would resolve this issue. We just need to get it on the floor and get it done.

We have proved today by the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act that we can take major issues, bring them to the floor, and move them forward, especially those that aren't particularly controversial. But my concern is that even though there doesn't seem to be controversy, it is just not happening, and now our centers are having to make plans for layoffs, for closures, and for closing their doors to the people who need the care.

This is something we can do. This is something we can resolve. It is within our power. The legislation is ready to go, and we should get this done.

We are leaving today for the Thanksgiving holiday, but if we leave at the end of the year and haven't done this, it will be a tragedy for rural America. It will be a betrayal of rural America. It will be a betrayal of our constituents.

All of us have been to these centers and seen the care that they provide, the caring that they provide, the passion that the people bring to the services in their communities, and how much they mean to their communities. This is one of the best Federal programs ever created, and it has always been supported on a bipartisan basis.

I urge my colleagues today to prepare ourselves to get this done as soon as we possibly can when we get back after Thanksgiving. We have so much to be thankful for, and I want my people in Maine to realize that they can be thankful for those health centers that are literally lifelines in their communities and mean so much to them. I believe this is something we can and should and will do.

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for being a leader on this issue.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 461, 462, 464, 478, 479, 480, 488, and 490.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Joseph Kernan, of Florida, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; Guy B. Roberts, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense; Robert L. Wilkie, of North Carolina, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; Robert Behler, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, Department of Defense; Thomas B. Modly, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of the Navy; James F. Geurts, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy; Robert H. McMahon, of Georgia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense; and Shon J. Manasco, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kernan, Roberts, Wilkie, Behler, Modly, Geurts, McMahon, and Manasco nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 491, 492, 493, 494, and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Rebecca Eliza Gonzales, of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-

Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Lesotho; Lisa A. Johnson, of Washington, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Namibia; Irwin Steven Goldstein, of New York, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy; Sean P. Lawler, of Maryland, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service; PN1199 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (169) beginning Lisa-Felicia Afi Akorli, and ending Stephanie P. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of November 1, 2017; and PN1200 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (4) beginning John R. Bass, II, and ending Sung Y. Kim, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of November 1, 2017.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Gonzales, Johnson, Goldstein, and Lawler nominations and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 475, 476, and 477.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of James Thomas Abbott, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2020; Colleen Kiko, of North Dakota, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 29, 2022; and Ernest W. Dubester, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2019.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Abbott, Kiko, and Dubester nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 292.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brenda Burman, of Arizona, to be Commissioner of Reclamation.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Burman nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE DOUGAN JACKSON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in a few days, Americans will celebrate Thanksgiving, a holiday that is filled with meaning and memories and, if we are lucky, sumptuous meals shared with family and friends.

Thanksgiving began as America's national harvest festival, a day to give thanks for our rich and fertile land and the great bounty of food it produces.

On this long Thanksgiving weekend, I plan to spend a few hours reading the latest book from one of my favorite friends whose works capture in loving detail life on her family's Wisconsin dairy farm, but even more, the rock-solid values that sustained her family and her life.

The book is called "The Round Barn: Biography of an American Farm." As one reviewer wrote, reading it "is like sitting on the porch of an early 20th century dairy farm and watching an era in American history pass right before your eyes."

The Round Barn books—there are three of them now—are the creations of Jackie Dougan Jackson, a novelist, poet, professor, mentor to generations of writers, and one of the best-loved residents in my hometown of Springfield, IL.

She lives in a big, old home in Springfield which, legend has it, was once visited by another master storyteller, Abraham Lincoln.

Loretta and I are lucky to count Jackie as a dear friend of many years. She is a kind, creative soul who never fails to reach out to help others. At the age of 89, she is still filled with energy, empathy and curiosity about nearly everything.

The Round Barn books keep a promise that Jackie made to her grandfather W.J. Dougan when she was just 15 years old. She vowed then that one day she would write a history of the dairy farm that W.J. had founded in 1906, the farm on which three generations of Jackie's family lived and worked.

Jackie Jackson throws open the Round Barn doors at the Dougan family farm to tell us an American story. She gives us a rich history of farm life at the mercy of the forces of science and the market but grounded in rock-solid Midwestern values.

Some of those values were painted onto the silo of the family's round barn. W.J. titled the list "Aims for the Farm." They were: "#1. Good Crops; #2. Proper Storage; #3. Profitable Live Stock; #4. A Stable Market"—and most important of all—"#5. Life as Well as a Living."

W.J. Dougan was a deeply spiritual man and a hard worker. He struggled for years to put himself through college and became a Methodist minister, but encroaching deafness forced him to give up the religious life he loved.

In 1906, he bought a dairy farm near Beloit, WI.

The Round Barn was built in 1911. W.J. chose the unusual shape because he believed that a barn braced on a central concrete pillar was cheaper to build, more efficient for a dairy operation, and less likely to blow away in a tornado. The Round Barn quickly became a county landmark.

W.J. marketed himself as "the Babies Milk Man," and he succeeded through

hard work, dedication to his customers and community, and an unusual talent for spotting and adopting cutting-edge advances in agriculture. In 1925, he was named a "Master Farmer" by a prestigious agricultural organization, one of only 23 Midwestern farmers so honored.

Even so, the Great Depression, which destroyed so many family farms and businesses, nearly wiped out the Dougan Guernsey Dairy Farm. In 1930, bankruptcy papers were drawn up but never filed.

Jackie was born in 1928, the year before the Great Depression, one of four children of W.J.'s son Ronald and Ronald's wife, Eunice.

Jackie was a natural born writer, a prodigy. When she was 8 she wrote a short story that took first prize in a Beloit citywide contest. Her first novel was serialized in the Galesburg Post in Illinois when she was 10.

She majored in classics at Beloit College, married, and then moved with her new husband to Ann Arbor, where they both earned master's degrees.

The couple had four daughters. Jackie would go on to earn a doctorate in Latin from the University of Wisconsin.

She was teaching writing at Kent State University in Ohio in 1967 when her father suffered a heart attack. Jackie went home and sat at his hospital bedside for weeks as he recounted stories of life on the family farm.

Back in Ohio after her father's recovery, Jackie became aware of a deep longing within her to reconnect with her rural beginnings. As she described it in one of her Round Barn books:

There has been another clock within her. She didn't set it nor place it there. It's been geared not to hours but to cycles; the daily procession of milking and bottling, feeding and cleaning the yearly procession of planting, cultivating, harvesting. It's been set to sun, moon, health, cold, wet dry. But now if there's a heavy spring freeze, she puts on a coat without sensing the loss of crisp that might result from too-late planting. If the sky lowers black, she takes an umbrella without feeling the sway of the hay wagon racing to reach the barn before the cloudburst. Her dailiness is not this class, that lecture, the next trip to the stacks. . . . It was the ground she'd stood on, the air she'd breathed. She had no special moment, no epiphany to explain the realization of loss that came over her. She only knows that something elemental is gone and has been gone for some time. That it's probably irretrievable, unless she changes the path she's treading.

So that is what she did. Jackie Jackson changed her life's path. She moved to Springfield, IL, and accepted a position teaching literature and writing at an innovative university that was just opening, Sangamon State University, now the University of Illinois at Springfield.

For years, she had been collecting stories and recollections about the Round Barn, her family, the dairy's customers, and the townspeople. Her trove of tales included her own notebooks, stretching back to when she was

8, the stories her father had told her from his hospital bed, letters and notes left by her grandfather, and much more.

She became a sort of detective, finding more letters tucked into framed pictures, stuck to the attic floor in the old family home all sorts of unexpected places. Each letter or scrap of paper became a piece of the family puzzle.

In 1976, she began to fashion the notes and letters into the first Round Barn book. The book published this month, "The Round Barn: Biography of an American Farm" is the fulfillment of her promise to her grandfather, her magnum opus, a detailed and loving portrait of a way of life that no longer exists.

The Dougan Guernsey Dairy Farm ceased operating in 1967, just as agribusiness and large corporate farms were beginning to redefine American farming.

In 1979, the Round Barn was added to the National Registry of Historic Places.

By 2012, the dilapidated old structure had become a safety hazard, and it was torn down, but thanks to Jackie Jackson's beautifully detailed biography of her family's farm and the people who lived and worked there, generations from now readers will still be able to visit the magical world of the Round Barn.

As this Thanksgiving Day, this American harvest festival, approaches, I am thankful for the Round Barn books that capture a bygone day of American farming like holograms, and Loretta and I are grateful to our friend Jackie for giving the world such a gift.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 277, on the nomination of Joseph Otting, of Nevada, to be Comptroller of the Currency. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 278, on the motion to invoke cloture on Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States district judge for the District of South Carolina. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 279, on the motion to invoke cloture on Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States district judge for the District of Columbia. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 280, on the nomination of Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States district judge for the District of South Carolina. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.●

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the votes on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 300, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 313, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 314, and the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 313.

On vote No. 277, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 300.

On vote No. 278, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 313.

On Vote No. 279, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 314.

On Vote No. 280, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 313.●

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I would like to review for the Senate the status of appropriations for fiscal year 2018.

The Appropriations Committee has marked up 8 of the 12 regular appropriations bills for this fiscal year. The committee has also processed two supplemental appropriations bills and one continuing resolution.

We have little time to finalize the regular appropriations bills and to consider additional supplemental appropriations requests for defense and for natural disaster recovery.

We need a new budget deal to finish our work. Congress and the administration must reach agreement on acceptable top-line funding levels for defense and nondefense programs.

At the funding cap currently in law, the Appropriations Committee would be hard-pressed to write a 2018 Defense bill that fully meets our national security needs or reflects the priorities of the Senate.

The current continuing resolution expires on December 8. We cannot afford to extend that CR into next year.

A budget agreement is necessary for the Senate to approve responsible appropriations legislation. I urge all parties to those negotiations to redouble their efforts to reach agreement.

WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims commemorates the millions of people killed and injured on the world's roads. It is also a day to thank emergency services for their role in saving lives; to reflect on the impact of road deaths on families and communities; and to draw attention to the need for improved legislation, awareness, infrastructure, technology, and post-crash responses to save more families from the tragedy of losing a loved one.

The theme of this year's World Day of Remembrance is "2020 Target: Reduce Road Fatalities and Serious Injuries by 50%." It refers to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 which calls on governments and their stakeholders, including NGOs and private citizens, to address the personal, medical, and financial burden that road deaths and injuries cause; 1.25 million people die from road crashes every year, and tens of millions are seriously injured. Road traffic crashes are the No. 1 killer of young people aged 15 to 29 and the eighth leading cause of death among all people worldwide.

Rochelle Sobel, president of the Association for Safe International Road Travel, said, "The World Day of Remembrance is an important opportunity to stand together with the global community to commemorate road victims and call for an end to the crisis on our roads. No one should have to go through the needless, preventable loss of a child, a brother, a mother, a friend, killed in a road traffic crash. This year's theme to reduce the number of deaths by 50% by 2020, reminds us of the need to drive responsibly, educate our children, and advocate with our governments to implement and enforce policies that will protect road users and prevent more families from suffering the pain of losing a loved one on the road."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS TERENCE PARSONS

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor PO2 Terence Parsons of Genesee, ID, whom the United Service Organization, USO has recognized as the USO's Sailor of the Year for 2017.

Terence Parsons took action to assist two motorists involved in car accidents and marines involved in a mass casualty situation. The USO explained, "Displaying unselfish devotion and great heroism, Terence Parsons, a Navy corpsman, put himself in harm's way to assist members of the community. While off duty on two separate occasions, he witnessed car accidents that caused potentially life-threatening injuries to the victims involved. With little thought of his own safety, Parsons responded by providing life-saving treatment." The USO further commended Terence Parsons for his response to a mass casualty event of 18 marines suffering multiple injuries sustained during U.S.S. *Oak Hill* U.S.S. *Kearsarge* amphibious warfare qualifications. Terence Parsons' quick action was pivotal in preventing further injury and saved numerous lives.

Terence joined the U.S. Navy in 2011 and credits the values, including a respect for hard work and teamwork, he obtained growing up in Genesee and the support of his family, command and friends with enabling his military success. Terence Parsons has also received many other recognitions for his

distinguished service. These honors include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. Congratulations, PO2 Terrence Parsons, on receiving this recognition, and thank you for your exceptional service on behalf of our Nation. You and the outstanding servicemembers you serve alongside are true assets to our communities, State, and Nation. I commend you on your achievements and wish you continued success.●

TRIBUTE TO RAY HAGEMAN

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the distinct honor of recognizing Garfield County's fire warden, Ray Hageman, for his actions to organize and coordinate the local response to the Lodgepole Complex fire. Ray and his team worked to preserve the lives and livelihoods that were threatened by this devastating fire. Their actions exemplify the resolute character of the Treasure State.

The Lodgepole Complex fire was one of the largest fires of the 2017 wildfire season. When first responders finally defeated the flames, well over a quarter million acres of land had burned. Ray was on the frontlines of this rural fire, orchestrating the distribution of local equipment, coordinating effective initial response techniques, and helping to integrate the efforts of partner firefighting organizations from outside the county.

Effective local leaders like Ray are supported by the committed team members they lead, team members like Garfield County's Anne Miller, who was the public information officer for the Lodgepole Complex fire. Anne worked around-the-clock at the beginning of the fire to build a common understanding of a changing fire environment. By enabling open and clear lines of communication, she strengthened the team's fire response efforts and saved many Montanans from potential loss of property and life.

Ray and his team weathered one of the largest wildfires in the Nation. Their courage in the face of adversity serves as an inspiration to all Montanans. Thank you, Ray, for leading under such difficult circumstances and working hard to protect Montanans from wildfires.●

TRIBUTE TO IKE MORRIS

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 80th birthday of Ike Morris, a proud honorary West Virginian, a legendary businessman, and one of the dearest friends I have ever known.

There is no better position to find yourself in than being able to give back to the community you love. I can attest my small hometown of Farmington helped mold who I am, and it brings so much joy to my life to be able to give back to the place that shaped me. Ike and I share a bond rooted in

public service. Whether supporting Glenville State College or getting the tab at the Cornerstone Cafe in Glenville, Ike enjoys every minute of it.

Ike got his start working for his father in the oil and gas business. Wanting to set out on his own, Ike moved to West Virginia in 1962 and worked servicing rigs until he established Waco Oil & Gas in 1975. No one in the north central region of the Mountain State gets confused when someone mentions "Waco." When you say "Waco" around here, people think of Ike Morris. They don't think of Texas.

It was in Glenville where Ike met the love of his life, Sue. He knew Sue was the right woman for him, and he knew that West Virginia was the right State for him. They have been married for over 50 years. As Ike can attest, once you come to West Virginia, it becomes part of you forever. The Mountain State made a lasting impact on him, and he and his family have made a lasting impact on the Mountain State. Ike is truly one of the most humble, generous and hard-working people I know.

Together, Ike and Sue have contributed to the success of many projects at Glenville State College, which is also home to the I.L. "Ike" and Sue Morris Stadium. As a lifelong educator and 1965 alumna of Glenville State, Sue knows how vital it is that our educational institutions are provided with the tools needed to keep up with ever-changing technologies. Their generous spirit and compassion extend throughout the Glenville community and beyond, touching the lives of countless West Virginia workers, students, and businessowners—all traits they have passed to their children and grandchildren.

Ike and Sue's children, Shelly and Doug, have both made Glenville their home. Ike and Sue are blessed with and immeasurably proud of their four grandchildren—Hannah, Luke, Ian, and Jordan—and their great-granddaughter, Arianna. Ike wouldn't let me stop without mentioning his beloved companion, Waco, his Labrador Retriever.

Ike, as your family and friends honor you, I know this will be a sincerely memorable occasion for you to reflect on your many accomplishments and experiences, while you enjoy the company of your loved ones. You have provided so much happiness and wisdom to the lives of those around you throughout the years. It is my wish that the memory of this special day remains with you and Sue just as your guidance and influence will remain in all the lives you have touched.

Again, it is with the greatest admiration that I send to you my best wishes on your special day. Happy Birthday.●

REMEMBERING ANNA KATHERINE DIGGS TAYLOR

● Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the life and legacy of the Honorable Anna Katherine Diggs

Taylor of Detroit, MI, for her trailblazing career as the first African-American female judge appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Judge Taylor was born Anna Katherine Johnston on December 9, 1932, to parents Virginus Douglass Johnston and Hazel Bramlette Johnston in Washington, DC. Her father Virginus served as treasurer for the prestigious Historically Black College, Howard University, while her mother Hazel was a business teacher and homemaker.

In a quest to equip their daughter with the best education and set the foundation for her legal career, Virginus and Hazel Johnston enrolled Judge Taylor in the Northfield School for Girls, one of very few schools accepting African-American students. She graduated from Northfield in 1950. After graduation, she went on to attend Columbia University's Barnard College for her bachelor's degree and received her law degree from Yale in 1957.

Judge Taylor's historic career began after her graduation when she became a staff lawyer in the Solicitor's office of the U.S. Department of Labor. After her post at the Department of Labor, she moved to Michigan and became the Assistant Prosecutor for Wayne County in 1961.

The Jim Crow era of the South was a harrowing time for America, and Judge Taylor courageously fought for civil rights during the 1960s. During the historic Freedom Summer campaign in 1964, she represented civil rights workers in Mississippi that were arrested for assisting African Americans in exercising their fundamental right to vote. Upon her arrival in Mississippi, three civil rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—went missing. While inquiring on their disappearance at the Neshoba County courthouse, she was met with disdain and racial epithets from a crowd gathering around the courthouse.

Following the terror she witnessed in Mississippi, where she feared for her own life, Judge Taylor returned to Michigan and continued to fight for equality with an intense determination. In 1966, she served as an assistant attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. After a brief period in the private sector, Judge Taylor joined State Senator Coleman A. Young's campaign for mayor of Detroit. Once elected mayor of Detroit, Coleman Young enlisted her help to improve racial inequality in the city.

After working on President Jimmy Carter's campaign, President Carter nominated Judge Taylor for the U.S. District Court in Detroit in 1979. Her appointment made her the first African-American woman to serve as judge in the United States Sixth Circuit Court. She went on to make groundbreaking rulings and became chief judge, serving from 1997 to 1998. After a 32-year career on the bench, Judge Diggs Taylor retired in 2011.

The Honorable Anna Katherine Diggs Taylor made a tremendous impact on America's judicial landscape. She was a formidable force on the bench, as well as gracious in character. Judge Taylor has received many recognitions throughout her impressive six-decade career and will be remembered as a champion for civil rights. Judge Taylor is survived by her husband, S. Martin Taylor, son Douglass Johnston Diggs, and daughter Carla Diggs Smith, four grandchildren, brother Lowell Douglass Johnston, as well as many relatives, friends, and colleagues. It is my hope that her legacy will inspire the next generation of leaders to follow their passion and to conquer each obstacle in front of them.●

TRIBUTE TO ROGER MEYER

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Roger Meyer for all of his hard work on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota while working in my Washington, DC, office.

Roger has devoted the majority of his career to public service, including working in Congress and at the Department of Energy. In addition, Roger spent time on detail at the Federal Emergency Management Agency as an adviser to the Small State and Rural Advocate.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Roger for his years in public service and wish him all the best in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO VAN PACE

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Van Pace for all of her hard work on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota while working in my Washington, DC, office.

Van has spent the majority of her career in public service, including time with the U.S. Department of Energy, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and most recently with the Department of Homeland Security. Immediately before her time in my office, Van was advising Federal offices and nonprofit organizations on regulatory requirements for grant awards.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Van for her years in public service and wish her all the best in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:12 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1207. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 306 River Street in Tilden, Texas, as the "Tilden Veterans Post Office".

H.R. 2331. An act to require a new or updated Federal website that is intended for use by the public to be mobile friendly, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2672. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 520 Carter Street in Fairview, Illinois, as the "Sgt. Douglas J. Riney Post Office".

H.R. 2873. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 207 Glenside Avenue in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, as the "Staff Sergeant Peter Taub Post Office Building".

H.R. 3369. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 225 North Main Street in Spring Lake, North Carolina, as the "Howard B. Pate, Jr. Post Office".

H.R. 3821. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 430 Main Street in Clermont, Georgia, as the "Zack T. Addington Post Office".

H.R. 3893. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Mathe Avenue in Interlachen, Florida, as the "Robert H. Jenkins, Jr. Post Office".

H.R. 4174. An act to amend titles 5 and 44, United States Code, to require Federal evaluation activities, improve Federal data management, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution recognizing the deep and abiding friendship between the United States and Israel.

At 11:01 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agreed to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 4:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1545. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose certain patient information to State controlled substance monitoring programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3949. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the designation of

State approving agencies for multi-State apprenticeship programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 4374. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize additional emergency uses for medical products to reduce deaths and severity of injuries caused by agents of war, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. STRANGE).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1207. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 306 River Street in Tilden, Texas, as the "Tilden Veterans Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2672. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 520 Carter Street in Fairview, Illinois, as the "Sgt. Douglas J. Riney Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2873. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 207 Glenside Avenue in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, as the "Staff Sergeant Peter Taub Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3369. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 225 North Main Street in Spring Lake, North Carolina, as the "Howard B. Pate, Jr. Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3821. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 430 Main Street in Clermont, Georgia, as the "Zack T. Addington Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3893. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Mathe Avenue in Interlachen, Florida, as the "Robert H. Jenkins, Jr. Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4174. An act to amend titles 5 and 44, United States Code, to require Federal evaluation activities, improve Federal data management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution recognizing the deep and abiding friendship between the United States and Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3457. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disturbance Control Standard—Contingency Reserve for Recovery from a Balancing Contingency Event Reliability Standard" (RIN1902-AF21)

(Docket No. RM16-7-000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 14, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3458. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2017-0188-2017-0196); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3459. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the six-month period from April 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3460. A communication from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3461. A communication from the Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3462. A communication from the President and CEO, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's fiscal year 2017 Annual Management Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3463. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department of Defense Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3464. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department of Defense Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3465. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CRAPO, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1591. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and for other purposes.

By Mr. ROBERTS, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, without amendment:

S. 2099. A bill to provide for the management by the Secretary of Agriculture of certain Federal land, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ROBERTS for the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

*Glen R. Smith, of Iowa, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board,

Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2022.

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Anthony Kurta, of Montana, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

*Gregory E. Maggs, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law.

*James E. McPherson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Army.

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Scott W. Brady, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years.

Andrew E. Lelling, of Massachusetts, to be United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts for the term of four years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2136. A bill to expand the monthly payments that may be eligible for public service loan forgiveness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 2137. A bill to amend the Rural Development Act of 1972 to improve access to grants for evidence-based substance use disorder treatment services in rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2138. A bill to authorize the creation of a commission to develop voluntary accessibility guidelines for electronic instructional materials and related technologies used in postsecondary education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2139. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to address critical conservation conditions under the regional conservation partnership program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 2140. A bill to provide for an exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. PAUL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HELLER, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms.

HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. COONS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2141. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to reform procedures for determinations on disposition of charges and the convening of courts-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KING:

S. 2142. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to establish the CHP Technical Assistance Partnership Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr.

BROWN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. REED, Mr. COONS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2143. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment, to expand coverage under such Act, to provide a process for achieving initial collective bargaining agreements, and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr.

CARDIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REED, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 2144. A bill to provide a process for granting lawful permanent resident status to aliens from certain countries who meet specified eligibility requirements; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr.

CARDIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2145. A bill to prohibit the United States Government from barring refugees from entering the United States based on their country of origin; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr.

TESTER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2146. A bill to extend the full Federal medical assistance percentage to urban Indian organizations; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. STA-

BENOW, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DONNELLY, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2147. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr.

BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2148. A bill to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department

of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to analyze and monitor domestic terrorist activity and require the Federal Government to take steps to prevent domestic terrorism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2149. A bill to make a technical correction to the provision of law authorizing a withdrawal and reservation of public land at Limestone Hills Training Area, Montana; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 2150. A bill to improve requirements for entering into commerce of imitation firearms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HOEVEN:

S. 2151. A bill to streamline the oil and gas permitting process and to recognize fee ownership for certain oil and gas drilling or spacing units, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. 2152. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for assistance for victims of child pornography, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HELLER:

S. 2153. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish electric vehicle weight limitations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2154. A bill to approve the Kickapoo Tribe Water Rights Settlement Agreement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. KING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2155. A bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. 2156. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide fairness in hospital payments under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. HASSAN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 2157. A bill to require drug manufacturers to disclose the prices of prescription drugs in any direct-to-consumer advertising and marketing to practitioners of a drug; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2158. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to clarify and improve the procedures and accountability for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence, to extend title VII of such Act, to ensure that the barriers to sharing critical foreign intelligence among the intelligence community that existed before September 11, 2001, are not reimposed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. HARRIS, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2159. A bill to require covered harassment and covered discrimination awareness and prevention training for Members, officers, employees, interns, fellows, and detailees of Congress within 30 days of employment and annually thereafter, to require a biennial climate survey of Congress, to amend the enforcement process under the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights for covered harassment and covered discrimination complaints, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2160. A bill to establish a pilot program under the Chief of the Forest Service may use alternative dispute resolution in lieu of judicial review of certain projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. Res. 335. A resolution designating the week of November 19 through November 25, 2017, during which the holiday of Thanksgiving is observed, as "National Family Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. Res. 336. A resolution recognizing the seriousness of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome and expressing support for the designation of the month of September 2018 as "Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Awareness Month"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 337. A resolution designating November 26, 2017, as "Drive Safer Sunday"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 338. A resolution commending and congratulating the Houston Astros on winning the 2017 Major League Baseball World Series; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REED):

S. Res. 339. A resolution designating November 2017 as "National Runaway Prevention Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. Res. 340. A resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 3d Infantry Division; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. Res. 341. A resolution designating the week beginning November 13, 2017, as "National Apprenticeship Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. REED):

S. Res. 342. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that States, cities, Tribal nations, businesses, and institutions of higher education in the United States should work towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Con. Res. 30. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress with respect to United States policy toward Tibet and that the treatment of the Tibetan people should be an important factor in the conduct of United States relations with the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 58

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 58, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 63

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 63, a bill to clarify the rights of Indians and Indian tribes on Indian lands under the National Labor Relations Act.

S. 91

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 91, a bill to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.

S. 322

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 426

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 426, a bill to increase educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for education and training of physician assistants of the Department, to establish pay grades and require competitive pay for physician assistants of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 654, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 732

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 732, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a refundable

tax credit against income tax for the purchase of qualified access technology for the blind.

S. 973

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 973, a bill to prohibit sale of shark fins, and for other purposes.

S. 978

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 978, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish an award program recognizing excellence exhibited by public school system employees providing services to students in pre-kindergarten through higher education.

S. 1016

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1016, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to telehealth services, and for other purposes.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for meals.

S. 1281

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1281, a bill to establish a bug bounty pilot program within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 1413

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1413, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to establish teacher leader development programs.

S. 1591

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1591, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and for other purposes.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1738, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a home infusion therapy services temporary transitional payment under the Medicare program.

S. 1871

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1871, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1927

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1927, a bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness.

S. 1962

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1962, a bill to provide relief to community banks, to promote access to capital for community banks, and for other purposes.

S. 2057

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2057, a bill to prevent conflicts of interest that stem from the revolving door that raises concerns about the independence of pharmaceutical regulators.

S. 2129

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2129, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to establish a punitive article in the Uniform Code of Military Justice on domestic violence, and for other purposes.

S. 2135

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2135, a bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

S. RES. 291

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 291, a resolution affirming the historical connection of the Jewish people to the ancient and sacred city of Jerusalem and condemning efforts at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to deny Judaism's millennia-old historical, religious, and cultural ties to Jerusalem.

S. RES. 319

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 319, a resolution supporting the goals, activities, and ideals of Prematurity Awareness Month.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. CAPITO,

Mr. CASEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2139. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to address critical conservation conditions under the regional conservation partnership program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act of 2017 to accelerate our efforts to restore the health of one of America's greatest natural treasures—the Chesapeake Bay. This legislation will strengthen our Bay clean-up program by increasing and better targeting resources under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which is administered by the Department of Agriculture (USDA).

I have long advocated for more effective protection, preservation, and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. During the development of the Farm Bill of 2008, I worked with my colleagues to adopt the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative, which provided assistance to farmers to help them prevent the excessive runoff of nutrients and sediments into the Bay and its tributaries. As a result of that initiative, about \$50 million was invested annually in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

In the 2014 Farm Bill, the RCPP was established to expand the successful concept of the Chesapeake Bay Initiative to our vital watersheds in the country. The goal of RCPP is to encourage stakeholders to partner with agricultural producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales.

Mr. President, while very successful nationally, the overall investment in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts through the RCPP has been reduced relative to investments that were made under the stand-alone Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative. That is why today I am introducing the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act to make refinements to the RCPP in order to improve conservation efforts in the Chesapeake Bay—and other vital watersheds—through providing additional funding, bolstering the role of critical conservation areas, and improving technical assistance.

On funding, this bill will triple the amount of mandatory funding for RCPP available per fiscal year from \$100 million to \$300 million. The bill also allows in-kind support to count towards a partner's matching contribution to a project.

The Chesapeake Bay has already been designated as a Critical Conservation Area under the RCPP. However, my bill will make refinements to the requirements for partnership agreements awarded within Critical Conservation Areas that recognize key

strengths of the Chesapeake Bay region. For example, the bill will strengthen the definitions of a critical conservation area to include critical conservation conditions that would improve water quality and water quantity. Furthermore, the bill adds a prioritization for partnership agreement applications that implement the project consistent with multi-State watershed restoration plans and bring together a diverse array of stakeholders into a project.

I have heard from many organizations in my state and others states in the Bay watershed that there is a significant need for better technical assistance to better implement the RCPP. Therefore, my bill authorizes the USDA to advance reasonable amounts of funding to eligible partners for technical assistance. Also, the bill allows the USDA to provide written feedback to applicants throughout the application process on how the proposals can be improved.

Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined in introducing the bill by Senator CARDIN, a long-time supporter of the Chesapeake Bay. My other Bay state colleagues, Senators CAPITO, KAINE, CASEY, MANCHIN, WARNER, CARPER, COONS and GILLIBRAND are also original cosponsors of the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act. My former colleague Congressman BOBBY SCOTT is introducing a companion measure in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, I am grateful that this bill has the support of Maryland Governor Hogan, 4 other Governors within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, and the Chesapeake Bay Commission. This bill is also supported by over 70 organizations such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and Choose Clean Water. Together, I look forward to working together to see the inclusion of this important legislation in the next Farm Bill.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 2140. A bill to provide for an exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Blackrock Land Exchange Act of 2017.

The legislation supports a mutually beneficial effort between the Bureau of Land Management and the J.R. Simplot Company in Idaho that began over 20 years ago. Simplot proposed an exchange of their privately owned land with superior natural resources and recreational opportunities for a similar sized parcel of BLM land adjacent to a Simplot phosphate processing facility. This facility adds significant value to the Pocatello, Idaho area as a large employer that sustains over 350 jobs with an over \$55 million annual economic impact.

In 2007, BLM issued a Final Decision Record on the Environmental Assess-

ment concluding the exchange would have no significant environmental impact, which was reaffirmed in 2009 by the Department of Interior Board of Land Appeals. However, the exchange has been held up since 2011 due to the District Court for Idaho ruling that BLM needed to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement including detailed future use to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

This raises the possibility of a dangerous precedent for future land conveyances, as the exchange itself does not authorize further activities. Future use of the proposed adjacent land by the phosphate facility would still be subject to NEPA with opportunity for public comment. Halting the Blackrock Land Exchange for this reason could largely increase the scope, length, and cost of the NEPA process.

This bill will allow for this exchange in Idaho that has support from—State and local government as well as various land users. It will also protect future exchanges from cycles of unnecessary review and litigation. The Blackrock Land Exchange Act of 2017 is in the best interest of Idaho land users, local economies, and future utilization of government land.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2148. A bill to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to analyze and monitor domestic terrorist activity and require the Federal Government to take steps to prevent domestic terrorism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2148

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) White supremacists and other right-wing extremists are the most significant domestic terrorism threat facing the United States.

(2) A 2009 report from the Extremism and Radicalization Branch of the Department of Homeland Security concluded “that lone wolves and small terrorist cells embracing violent right-wing extremist ideology are the most dangerous domestic terrorism threat in the United States”.

(3) An unclassified May 2017 joint intelligence bulletin from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security found that “white supremacist extremism poses [a] persistent threat of lethal violence,” and that white supremacists “were responsible for 49 homicides in 26 attacks from 2000 to 2016 . . . more than any other domestic extremist movement”.

(4) According to the New America Foundation, since September 11, 2001, 76 Americans have died in terrorist attacks by domestic extremists in the United States. 89 percent were killed by far-right-wing extremists.

(5) The fatal attacks described in paragraph (4) include—

(A) the August 5, 2012, mass shooting at a Sikh gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, in which a white supremacist shot and killed 6 members of the gurdwara;

(B) the April 13, 2014, mass shooting at a Jewish community center and a Jewish assisted living facility in Overland Park, Kansas, in which a neo-Nazi shot and killed 3 civilians, including a 14-year-old teenager;

(C) the June 8, 2014, ambush in Las Vegas, Nevada, in which 2 supporters of the far right-wing “patriot” movement shot and killed 2 police officers and a civilian;

(D) the June 17, 2015, mass shooting at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, in which a white supremacist shot and killed 9 members of the church;

(E) the November 27, 2015, mass shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in which an anti-abortion extremist shot and killed a police officer and 2 civilians;

(F) the March 20, 2017, murder of an African-American man in New York City, allegedly committed by a white supremacist who reportedly traveled to New York “for the purpose of killing black men”;

(G) the May 26, 2017, attack in Portland, Oregon, in which a white supremacist allegedly murdered 2 men and injured a third after the men defended 2 young women whom the individual had targeted with anti-Muslim hate speech; and

(H) the August 12, 2017, attack in Charlottesville, Virginia, in which a white supremacist allegedly killed 1 and injured 19 after driving his car through a crowd of individuals protesting a neo-Nazi rally, and of which Attorney General Jeff Sessions said, “It does meet the definition of domestic terrorism in our statute.”.

(6) The Anti-Defamation League’s Center on Extremism found that right-wing extremists were responsible for 150 terrorist acts, attempted acts, and plots and conspiracies that took place in the United States between 1993 and 2017. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 255 people and injured more than 600.

(7) According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, in 2015, for the first time in 5 years, the number of hate groups in the United States rose by 14 percent. The increase included a more than twofold rise in the number of Ku Klux Klan chapters. The number of anti-government militias and “patriot” groups also grew by 14 percent in 2015.

(8) In November 2017, the Federal Bureau of Investigation released its annual hate crime incident report, which found that in 2016, hate crimes increased by almost 5 percent, including a 19 percent rise in hate crimes against American Muslims. Similarly, the previous year’s report found that in 2015, hate crimes increased by 6 percent. Much of that increase came from a 66 percent rise in attacks on American Muslims. In both reports, race-based crimes were most numerous; more than 50 percent of those hate crimes targeted African Americans.

(9) In January 2017, a right-wing extremist who had expressed anti-Muslim views was

charged with murder for allegedly killing 6 people and injuring 19 in a shooting rampage at a mosque in Quebec City, Canada. It was the first-ever mass shooting at a mosque in North America, and Prime Minister Trudeau labeled it a terrorist attack.

(10) Between January and July 2017, news reports found 63 incidents in which American mosques were targeted by threats, vandalism, or arson.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “Director” means the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

(2) the term “domestic terrorism” has the meaning given the term in section 2331 of title 18, United States Code;

(3) the term “Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee” means the committee within the Department of Justice tasked with assessing and sharing information about ongoing domestic terrorism threats; and

(4) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

SEC. 4. OFFICES TO COMBAT DOMESTIC TERRORISM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF OFFICES TO MONITOR, ANALYZE, INVESTIGATE, AND PROSECUTE DOMESTIC TERRORISM.—

(1) DOMESTIC TERRORISM UNIT.—There is authorized a Domestic Terrorism Unit in the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security, which shall be responsible for monitoring and analyzing domestic terrorism activity.

(2) DOMESTIC TERRORISM OFFICE.—There is authorized a Domestic Terrorism Office in the Counterterrorism Section of the National Security Division of the Department of Justice—

(A) which shall be responsible for investigating and prosecuting incidents of domestic terrorism; and

(B) which shall be headed by the Domestic Terrorism Counsel.

(3) DOMESTIC TERRORISM SECTION OF THE FBI.—There is authorized a Domestic Terrorism Section within the Counterterrorism Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which shall be responsible for investigating domestic terrorism activity.

(b) JOINT REPORT ON DOMESTIC TERRORISM.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and each year thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall submit a joint report authored by the domestic terrorism offices authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a) to—

(A) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an assessment of the domestic terrorism threat posed by white supremacists, including white supremacist infiltration and recruitment of law enforcement officers and members of the Armed Forces;

(B)(i) in the first report, an analysis of incidents or attempted incidents of domestic terrorism that have occurred in the United States since April 19, 1995; and

(ii) in each subsequent report, an analysis of incidents or attempted incidents of domestic terrorism that occurred in the United States during the preceding year; and

(C) a quantitative analysis of domestic terrorism for the preceding year, including the number of—

(i) domestic terrorism related assessments initiated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including the number of assessments from each classification and subcategory;

(ii) domestic terrorism related preliminary investigations initiated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including the number of preliminary investigations from each classification and subcategory, and how many preliminary investigations resulted from assessments;

(iii) domestic terrorism related full investigations initiated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including the number of full investigations from each classification and subcategory, and how many full investigations resulted from preliminary investigations and assessments;

(iv) domestic terrorism related incidents, including the number of incidents from each classification and subcategory, the number of deaths and injuries resulting from each incident, and a detailed explanation of each incident;

(v) Federal domestic terrorism related arrests, including the number of arrests from each classification and subcategory, and a detailed explanation of each arrest;

(vi) Federal domestic terrorism related indictments, including the number of indictments from each classification and subcategory, and a detailed explanation of each indictment;

(vii) Federal domestic terrorism related prosecutions, including the number of incidents from each classification and subcategory, and a detailed explanation of each prosecution;

(viii) Federal domestic terrorism related convictions, including the number of convictions from each classification and subcategory, and a detailed explanation of each conviction; and

(ix) Federal domestic terrorism related weapons recoveries, including the number of each type of weapon and the number of weapons from each classification and subcategory.

(3) CLASSIFICATION AND PUBLIC RELEASE.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall be—

(A) unclassified, to the greatest extent possible, with a classified annex only if necessary; and

(B) in the case of the unclassified portion of the report, posted on the public websites of the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(c) DOMESTIC TERRORISM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—There is authorized a Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee, which shall—

(1) meet on a regular basis, and not less regularly than 4 times each year, to coordinate with United States Attorneys and other key public safety officials across the country to promote information sharing and ensure an effective, responsive, and organized joint effort to combat domestic terrorism; and

(2) be co-chaired by—

(A) the Domestic Terrorism Counsel authorized under subsection (a)(2)(B);

(B) a United States Attorney or Assistant United States Attorney;

(C) a member of the National Security Division of the Department of Justice; and

(D) a member of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(d) FOCUS ON GREATEST THREATS.—The domestic terrorism offices authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a) shall focus their limited resources on the most significant domestic terrorism threats, as determined by the number of domestic terrorism related incidents from each category and subclassification in the joint re-

port for the preceding year required under subsection (b).

SEC. 5. TRAINING TO COMBAT DOMESTIC TERRORISM.

(a) REQUIRED TRAINING AND RESOURCES.—The State and Local Anti-Terrorism Program, funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the Department of Justice, shall include training and resources to assist State, local, and tribal law enforcement officers in understanding, detecting, deterring, and investigating acts of domestic terrorism. The training shall focus on the most significant domestic terrorism threats, as determined by the quantitative analysis in the joint report required under section 4(b).

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Any individual who provides domestic terrorism training required under this section shall have—

(1) expertise in domestic terrorism; and

(2) relevant academic, law enforcement, or other experience in matters related to domestic terrorism.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and once each year thereafter, the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance shall submit an annual report to the committees of Congress described in section 4(b)(1) on the domestic terrorism training implemented under this section, which shall include copies of all training materials used and the names and qualifications of the individuals who provide the training.

(2) CLASSIFICATION.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall be unclassified, to the greatest extent possible, with a classified annex only if necessary.

SEC. 6. COMBATTING DOMESTIC TERRORISM THROUGH JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCES AND FUSION CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The joint terrorism task forces of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and State, local, and regional fusion centers, as established under section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h), shall each, in coordination with the Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee and the domestic terrorism offices authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of section 4(a) of this Act—

(1) share intelligence to address domestic terrorism activities;

(2) conduct an annual, intelligence-based assessment of domestic terrorism activities in their jurisdictions; and

(3) formulate and execute a plan to address and combat domestic terrorism activities in their jurisdictions.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—The activities required under subsection (a) shall focus on the most significant domestic terrorism threats, as determined by the number of domestic terrorism related incidents from each category and subclassification in the joint report for the preceding year required under section 4(b).

SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Homeland Security such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2149. A bill to make a technical correction to the provision of law authorizing a withdrawal and reservation of public land at Limestone Hills Training Area, Montana; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2149

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL CORRECTION TO WITHDRAWAL AND RESERVATION OF PUBLIC LAND AUTHORITY, LIMESTONE HILLS TRAINING AREA, MONTANA.

Section 2931(b) of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (division B of Public Law 113–66; 127 Stat. 1031) is amended by striking “18,644 acres in Broadwater County, Montana, generally depicted as ‘Proposed Land Withdrawal’ on the map entitled ‘Limestone Hills Training Area Land Withdrawal’, dated April 10, 2013” and inserting “18,964 acres in Broadwater County, Montana, generally depicted as ‘Limestone Hills Training Area Land Withdrawal’ on the map entitled ‘Limestone Hills Training Area Land Withdrawal’, dated May 11, 2017”.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. KING, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. HASSAN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 2157. A bill to require drug manufacturers to disclose the prices of prescription drugs in any direct-to-consumer advertising and marketing to practitioners of a drug; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2157

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Drug-Price Transparency in Communications Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) Direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription pharmaceuticals is legal in only 2 developed countries, the United States and New Zealand.

(2) Direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription pharmaceuticals is designed to cause patients to pressure physicians to prescribe certain medications.

(3) In 2015, pharmaceutical companies spent more than \$100,000,000 on advertising with respect to each of 16 brand-name drugs, primarily new and expensive drugs.

(4) Prescription rates of medications advertised directly to consumers have increased by 34.2 percent compared to a 5.1 percent increase in other pharmaceuticals.

(5) Prescription pharmaceuticals cost more in the United States than they do in any other country.

(6) The American Medical Association has passed resolutions calling for the ban of direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription pharmaceuticals, and to require price transparency in any direct-to-consumer advertising.

(7) The amount of spending by pharmaceutical companies in marketing to health care providers is more than 4 times the spending for direct-to-consumer advertising.

(8) Health care providers are more likely to prescribe a certain drug if they have received payments or marketing materials from the manufacturer of that drug.

SEC. 3. PRICE DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT FOR DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER DRUG ADVERTISEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(g)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 333(g)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(A)” and inserting “(i)”;

(2) by striking “(B)” and inserting (ii);

(3) by striking “(1) With respect” and inserting “(1)(A) With respect”;

(4) by striking “this paragraph” each place it appears and inserting “this subparagraph”;

(5) by striking “No other civil monetary penalties in this Act (including the civil penalty in section 303(f)(4))” and inserting “No civil monetary penalties (including the civil penalty in section 303(f)(4)), other than the penalties under this subparagraph and subparagraph (B)”;

(6) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) With respect to a person who is a holder of an approved application under section 505 for a drug subject to section 503(b) or under section 351 of the Public Health Service Act, any such person who disseminates or causes another party to disseminate a direct-to-consumer advertisement that does not include the wholesale acquisition cost (as defined in section 1847A(c)(6)(B) of the Social Security Act) for a 30-day supply of the drug shall be liable to the United States for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 for the first such violation in any 3-year period, and not to exceed \$5,000,000 for each subsequent violation in any 3-year period. For purposes of this subparagraph, all violations under this paragraph occurring in a single day shall be considered one violation. With respect to advertisements that appear in magazines or other publications that are published less frequently than daily, each issue date (whether weekly or monthly) shall be treated as a single day for the purpose of calculating the number of violations under this subparagraph.”.

(b) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—For each fiscal year, there are authorized to be appropriated, and are appropriated, out of any funds not otherwise obligated, to the Director of the National Institutes of Health for purposes of carrying out medical research, an amount equal to the amount collected in penalties during the previous fiscal year for violations of section 303(g)(1)(B) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

(c) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, shall promulgate regulations to carry out subparagraph (B) of section 303(g)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 333(g)(1)), as added by subsection (a). Such regulations shall include provisions setting forth—

(1) a reasonable amount of time a manufacturer has to update any direct-to-consumer advertising of a drug in accordance with such subparagraph (B) after a change to the wholesale acquisition cost of the drug; and

(2) the specific manner in which the wholesale acquisition cost of a drug is required to be conspicuously disclosed in such direct-to-consumer advertisements in order to communicate such single price metric to the public, which shall include visual and audio (as applicable) components of the advertisement, and which may include a brief qualitative explanation of reduced cost availability for certain consumers, such as through insurance cost-sharing arrangements or patient assistance programs.

SEC. 4. DRUG MANUFACTURER DUTY TO DISCLOSE DRUG PRICES TO PRACTITIONERS.

(a) DUTY TO DISCLOSE.—Whenever a drug manufacturer, including any representative

of the manufacturer, communicates with a health care practitioner about a drug manufactured by the drug manufacturer, including through promotional, educational, or marketing communications, meetings or paid events, and the provision of goods, gifts, and samples, the drug manufacturer shall disclose to the practitioner the wholesale acquisition cost (as defined in section 1847A(c)(6)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3a(c)(6)(B))) for a 30-day supply of the drug, which may include a brief qualitative explanation of reduced cost availability for certain consumers that is consistent with the regulations described in section 3(c)(2).

(b) ENFORCEMENT BY FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.—

(1) UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE ACTS OR PRACTICES.—A violation of subsection (a) by a person with respect to whom the Commission is empowered under section 5(a)(2) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)(2)) shall be treated as a violation of a rule defining an unfair or deceptive act or practice prescribed under section 18(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 57a(a)(1)(B)).

(2) POWERS OF FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Trade Commission shall enforce this section in the same manner, by the same means, and with the same jurisdiction, powers, and duties as though all applicable terms and provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.) were incorporated into and made a part of this Act.

(B) PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.—Any person who violates this section shall be subject to the penalties and entitled to the privileges and immunities provided in the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.).

(c) RULEMAKING.—The Federal Trade Commission shall promulgate in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code, such rules as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(d) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit, impair, or supersede the operation of the Federal Trade Commission Act or any other provision of Federal law.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2160. A bill to establish a pilot program under the Chief of the Forest Service may use alternative dispute resolution in lieu of judicial review of certain projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2160

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protect Collaboration for Healthier Forests Act”.

SEC. 2. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) PARTICIPANT.—The term “participant” means an individual or entity that files an objection or scoping comments on a draft environmental document with respect to a project that is subject to an objection at the project level under part 218 of title 36, Code

of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

(2) **PILOT PROGRAM.**—The term “pilot program” means the pilot program established under subsection (b).

(3) **PROJECT.**—The term “project” means a project described in subsection (c).

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(b) **ARBITRATION PILOT PROGRAM.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish within Region 1 of the Forest Service an arbitration pilot program as an alternative dispute resolution process in lieu of judicial review for projects described in subsection (c).

(c) **DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, at the sole discretion of the Secretary, may designate for arbitration projects that—

(A)(i) are developed through a collaborative process (within the meaning of section 603(b)(1)(C) of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(b)(1)(C)));

(ii) are carried out under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program established under section 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303); or

(iii) are identified in a community wildfire protection plan (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511));

(B) have as a purpose—

(i) hazardous fuels reduction; or

(ii) mitigation of insect or disease infestation; and

(C) are located, in whole or in part, in a wildland-urban interface (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511)).

(2) **INCLUSION.**—In designating projects for arbitration, the Secretary may include projects that receive categorical exclusions for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(d) **LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF PROJECTS.**—The Secretary may not designate for arbitration under the pilot program more than 2 projects per calendar year.

(e) **ARBITRATORS.**—

(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Secretary shall develop and publish a list of not fewer than 15 individuals eligible to serve as arbitrators for the pilot program.

(2) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—To be eligible to serve as an arbitrator under this subsection, an individual shall be—

(A) certified by—

(i) the American Arbitration Association; or

(ii) a State arbitration program; or

(B) a fully retired Federal or State judge.

(f) **INITIATION OF ARBITRATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 7 days after the date on which the Secretary issues the final decision with respect to a project, the Secretary shall—

(A) notify each applicable participant and the Clerk of the United States District Court for the district in which the project is located that the project has been designated for arbitration in accordance with this Act; and

(B) include in the decision document a statement that the project has been designated for arbitration.

(2) **INITIATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—A participant may initiate arbitration regarding a project that has been designated for arbitration under this Act in accordance with—

(i) sections 571 through 584 of title 5, United States Code; and

(ii) this paragraph.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS.**—A request to initiate arbitration under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) be filed not later than the date that is 30 days after the date of the notification by the Secretary under paragraph (1); and

(ii) include an alternative proposal for the applicable project that describes each modification sought by the participant with respect to the project.

(C) **NO JUDICIAL REVIEW.**—A project for which arbitration is initiated under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to judicial review.

(3) **COMPELLED ARBITRATION.**—

(A) **MOTION TO COMPEL ARBITRATION.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—If a participant seeks judicial review of a final decision with respect to a project, the Secretary may file in the applicable court a motion to compel arbitration in accordance with this Act.

(ii) **FEES AND COSTS.**—For any motion described in clause (i) for which the Secretary is the prevailing party, the applicable court shall award to the Secretary—

(I) court costs; and

(II) attorney's fees.

(B) **ARBITRATION COMPELLED BY COURT.**—If a participant seeks judicial review of a project, the applicable court shall compel arbitration in accordance with this Act.

(g) **SELECTION OF ARBITRATOR.**—For each arbitration commenced under this Act—

(1) the Secretary shall propose 3 arbitrators from the list published under subsection (e)(1); and

(2) the applicable participant shall select 1 arbitrator from the list of arbitrators proposed under paragraph (1).

(h) **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ARBITRATOR.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An arbitrator selected under subsection (e)—

(A) shall address all claims of each party seeking arbitration with respect to a project under this Act; but

(B) may consolidate into a single arbitration all requests to initiate arbitration by all participants with respect to a project.

(2) **SELECTION OF PROPOSALS.**—An arbitrator shall make a decision with respect to each applicable request for initiation of arbitration under this Act by—

(A) selecting the project, as approved by the Secretary;

(B) selecting an alternative proposal submitted by the applicable participant; or

(C) rejecting both projects described in subparagraphs (A) and (B).

(3) **LIMITATIONS.**—

(A) **ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD.**—The evidence before an arbitrator under this subsection shall be limited solely to the administrative record for the project.

(B) **NO MODIFICATIONS TO PROPOSALS.**—An arbitrator may not modify any proposal contained in a request for initiation of arbitration of a participant under this Act.

(i) **INTERVENTION.**—A party may intervene in an arbitration under this Act if, with respect to the project to which the arbitration relates, the party—

(1) meets the requirements of Rule 24(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (or a successor rule); or

(2) participated in the applicable collaborative process referred to in clause (i) or (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(A).

(j) **SCOPE OF REVIEW.**—In carrying out arbitration for a project, the arbitrator shall set aside the agency action, findings, and conclusions found to be arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law, within the meaning of section 706(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code.

(k) **DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF ARBITRATION.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a request to initiate arbitration is filed under subsection (f)(2), the arbitrator

shall make a decision with respect to the request to initiate arbitration.

(1) **EFFECT OF ARBITRATION DECISION.**—A decision of an arbitrator under this Act—

(1) shall not be considered to be a major Federal action;

(2) shall be binding; and

(3) shall not be subject to judicial review, except as provided in section 10(a) of title 9, United States Code.

(m) **ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall—

(A) be solely responsible for the professional fees of arbitrators participating in the pilot program; and

(B) use funds made available to the Secretary and not otherwise obligated to carry out subparagraph (A).

(2) **ATTORNEY'S FEES.**—No arbitrator may award attorney's fees in any arbitration brought under this Act.

(n) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the pilot program is established, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, and publish on the website of Region 1 of the Forest Service, a report of not longer than 10 pages describing the implementation of the pilot program for the applicable year, including—

(A) the reasons for selecting certain projects for arbitration;

(B) an evaluation of the arbitration process, including any recommendations for improvements to the process;

(C) a description of the outcome of each arbitration; and

(D) a summary of the impacts of each outcome described in subparagraph (C) on the timeline for implementation and completion of the applicable project.

(2) **GAO REVIEWS AND REPORTS.**—

(A) **INITIAL REVIEW.**—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the pilot program is established, the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the implementation by the Secretary of the pilot program.

(B) **REVIEW ON TERMINATION.**—On termination of the pilot program under subsection (o), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the implementation by the Secretary of the pilot program.

(C) **REPORT.**—On completion of the review described in subparagraph (A) or (B), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report describing the results of the applicable review.

(o) **TERMINATION.**—The pilot program shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date .

(p) **EFFECT.**—Nothing in this Act affects the responsibility of the Secretary to comply with—

(1) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

(2) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 335—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19 THROUGH NOVEMBER 25, 2017, DURING WHICH THE HOLIDAY OF THANKSGIVING IS OBSERVED, AS “NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK”

Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 335

Whereas the family is the basic strength of any free and orderly society;

Whereas it is appropriate to honor the family unit as essential to the continued well-being of the United States; and

Whereas it is fitting that official recognition be given to the importance of family loyalties and ties: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of November 19 through November 25, 2017, during which the holiday of Thanksgiving is observed, as “National Family Week”;

(2) encourages States and local governments to designate the week of November 19 through November 25, 2017, as “National Family Week”; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe “National Family Week” with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 336—RECOGNIZING THE SERIOUSNESS OF POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2018 AS “POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH”

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 336

Whereas Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (referred to in this preamble as “PCOS”) is a common health problem among women and girls involving a hormonal imbalance;

Whereas there is no universal definition of PCOS, but researchers estimate that between 5,000,000 and 10,000,000 women in the United States are affected by PCOS;

Whereas PCOS can affect women from the onset of puberty and throughout the remainder of their lives;

Whereas the symptoms of PCOS include infertility, irregular or absent menstrual periods, acne, weight gain, thinning scalp hair, excessive facial and body hair growth, numerous small ovarian cysts, pelvic pain, and mental health problems;

Whereas women with PCOS have higher rates of psychosocial disorders, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders, and are at greater risk for suicide;

Whereas adolescents with PCOS often are not diagnosed;

Whereas PCOS causes metabolic dysfunction and insulin resistance, which can lead to type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obstructive sleep apnea, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, and endometrial cancer at a young adult age;

Whereas PCOS is the most common cause of female infertility;

Whereas PCOS in pregnancy is associated with increased risk of gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, pregnancy-induced hypertension, preterm delivery, cesarean delivery, miscarriage, and fetal and infant death;

Whereas women with PCOS are at increased risk of developing high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke, heart disease—the leading cause of death among women—and have a 4 to 7 times higher risk of experiencing a heart attack compared to women of the same age who do not have PCOS;

Whereas women with PCOS have a more than 50 percent chance of developing type 2 diabetes or prediabetes before the age of 40;

Whereas women with PCOS may be at a higher risk for breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and have a 3 times higher risk for developing endometrial cancer, compared to women who do not have PCOS;

Whereas up to 80 percent of women in the United States with PCOS are overweight or have obesity;

Whereas an estimated 50 percent of women with PCOS are undiagnosed, and many remain undiagnosed until they experience fertility difficulties or develop type 2 diabetes or other cardiometabolic disorders;

Whereas the costs involved with the diagnosis and management of PCOS to the healthcare system of the United States is over \$4,300,000,000 per year during the reproductive years of patients;

Whereas that amount does not include the costs associated with the treatment of comorbidities, including high blood pressure, sleep apnea, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and cancer;

Whereas the cause of PCOS is unknown, but researchers have found strong links to significant insulin resistance, which affects up to 70 percent of women with PCOS, and genetic predisposition; and

Whereas there is no known cure for PCOS: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the seriousness of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (referred to in this resolving clause as “PCOS”);

(2) supports the goals of PCOS Awareness Month—

(A) to increase awareness of, and education about, PCOS among the general public, women, girls, and healthcare professionals;

(B) to improve diagnosis and treatment of PCOS;

(C) to disseminate information on diagnosis and treatment options for PCOS; and

(D) to improve the quality of life and outcomes for women and girls with PCOS;

(3) recognizes the need for further research, improved treatment and care options, and a cure for PCOS;

(4) acknowledges the struggles affecting all women and girls residing within the United States who are afflicted with PCOS;

(5) urges medical researchers and healthcare professionals to advance their understanding of PCOS in order to research, diagnose, and provide assistance to women and girls with PCOS; and

(6) encourages States, territories, and localities to support the goals of PCOS Awareness Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 337—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 26, 2017, AS “DRIVE SAFER SUNDAY”

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 337

Whereas motor vehicle travel is the primary means of transportation in the United States;

Whereas every individual traveling on roads and highways should drive in a safe manner so as to reduce deaths and injuries that result from motor vehicle accidents;

Whereas, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, wearing a seat belt saves as many as 15,000 lives each year; and

Whereas the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest highway traffic day of the year: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages—

(A) high schools, colleges, universities, administrators, teachers, primary schools, and secondary schools to launch campus-wide educational campaigns to urge students to focus on safety when driving;

(B) national trucking firms—

(i) to alert employee drivers to be especially focused on driving safely on the Sunday after Thanksgiving; and

(ii) to publicize the importance of driving safely on the Sunday after Thanksgiving on the Citizens Band Radio Service and at truck stops across the United States;

(C) clergies to remind congregations to travel safely when attending services and gatherings;

(D) law enforcement personnel to remind drivers and passengers to drive safely, particularly on the Sunday after Thanksgiving;

(E) motorists to drive safely during the holiday season and throughout the rest of the year; and

(F) the people of the United States—

(i) to understand the life-saving importance of wearing a seat belt; and

(ii) to educate themselves about highway safety; and

(2) designates November 26, 2017, as “Drive Safer Sunday”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 338—COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE HOUSTON ASTROS ON WINNING THE 2017 MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL WORLD SERIES

Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 338

Whereas, on November 1, 2017, the Houston Astros won the 2017 Major League Baseball World Series (referred to in this preamble as the “World Series”) with a 5–1 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers;

Whereas the Houston Astros won the World Series in Game 7 at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, California;

Whereas the Houston Astros overcame the home field advantage of the Los Angeles Dodgers to win the World Series;

Whereas all of the following 25 players on the World Series roster of the Houston Astros should be congratulated: Jose Altuve, Carlos Beltran, Alex Bregman, Juan Centeno, Carlos Correa, Chris Devenski, Derek Fisher, Evan Gattis, Ken Giles, Marwin Gonzalez, Luke Gregerson, Yulieski Gurriel, Will Harris, Dallas Keuchel, Francisco Liriano, Cameron Maybin, Brian McCann, Lance McCullers, Jr., Collin McHugh, Charlie Morton, Joe Musgrove, Brad Peacock, Josh Reddick, George Springer, and Justin Verlander;

Whereas, in addition to the World Series roster, all of the following Houston Astros

players who contributed to the 2017 regular season should be congratulated: Norichika Aoki, Tyler Clippard, J.D. Davis, Dayan Diaz, Michael Feliz, Mike Fiers, Reymin Guduan, Jandel Gustave, Teoscar Hernandez, James Hoyt, Jordan Jankowski, Tony Kemp, Jake Marisnick, Francis Martes, Colin Moran, David Paulino, A.J. Reed, Tony Sipp, Max Stassi, Ashur Tolliver, and Tyler White;

Whereas the front office, the clubhouse, and all of the supporting staff and team members of the Houston Astros should be congratulated;

Whereas the Houston Astros won an incredible 101 games during the regular season, which earned the team the American League West division championship;

Whereas the following 6 Houston Astros players selected to the 2017 Major League Baseball All-Star Game should be congratulated: Jose Altuve, Carlos Correa, Chris Devenski, Dallas Keuchel, Lance McCullers, Jr., and George Springer;

Whereas the Houston Astros became the first team in the history of Major League Baseball to capture both the National League Championship pennant and the American League Championship pennant;

Whereas the Houston Astros bounced back from a loss in the 2015 playoffs to win the American League Championship pennant for the first time;

Whereas Houston Astros center fielder George Springer broke the record for extra base hits in the World Series, including 5 home runs, and was named the Most Valuable Player in the World Series;

Whereas Houston Astros catcher Brian McCann, in the first year playing for the Houston Astros, hit a home run in Game 5 of the World Series, and guided the pitching staff for 7 games;

Whereas Alex Bregman is the first Jewish player to hit a World Series walk off hit, which led the Houston Astros past the Los Angeles Dodgers in a 13-12, 10-inning win in Game 5 of the World Series;

Whereas Houston Astros pitcher Justin Verlander was named the Most Valuable Player of the American League Championship Series;

Whereas Houston Astros second baseman Jose Altuve—

(1) compiled at least 200 hits for the fourth consecutive year; and

(2) won a Silver Slugger Award for best American League second baseman;

Whereas Houston Astros General Manager Jeff Luhnow joined the Houston Astros front office in 2011 and succeeded in building a World Series championship team;

Whereas the Houston Astros fell short in the 2015 American League Division Series, fueling a determination—

(1) to return to the playoffs; and

(2) to win the World Series in 2017;

Whereas Houston Astros fans followed the triumphs of the 2017 season by tuning into games called by Houston Astros television broadcasters Geoff Blum and Todd Kalas and Houston Astros radio broadcasters Robert Ford and Steve Sparks;

Whereas the Houston Astros played the following 3 excellent teams in the 2017 postseason that should be congratulated:

(1) the Boston Red Sox in the American League Division Series;

(2) the New York Yankees in the American League Championship Series; and

(3) the Los Angeles Dodgers in the World Series;

Whereas the Houston Astros won the World Series for the first time ever, filling with pride the people in the city of Houston and Houston Astros fans everywhere;

Whereas the Houston Astros showed extraordinary steadiness, teamwork, focus, and love of the game;

Whereas the Houston Astros is an organization of great character, determination, and heart, and a reflection of the city of Houston and the State of Texas;

Whereas, in the wake of Hurricane Harvey and the devastation along the entire Gulf Coast in the State of Texas, the Houston Astros as World Series champions personifies the “can do” Texas spirit and signals to the world that, even after an incredibly difficult few months, the State of Texas is coming back stronger than ever; and

Whereas the Houston Astros are the 2017 World Series champions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Houston Astros—

(A) for winning the 2017 Major League Baseball World Series championship title; and

(B) for an outstanding performance during the 2017 Major League Baseball season;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the players, coaches, management, and support staff of the Houston Astros, which made victory possible;

(3) recognizes the dedication, hard work, and persistence of the operations staff of Minute Maid Park in the city of Houston;

(4) congratulates—

(A) the city of Houston;

(B) Houston Astros fans everywhere;

(C) the mayor of the city of Houston, the Honorable Sylvester Turner;

(D) Houston Astros Owner and Chairman Jim Crane and the Crane family;

(E) Houston Astros President of Business Operations Reid Ryan; and

(F) Houston Astros Executive Advisor Nolan Ryan; and

(5) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) Houston Astros Owner and Chairman Jim Crane;

(B) Houston Astros General Manager Jeff Luhnow; and

(C) Houston Astros Manager A.J. Hinch.

SENATE RESOLUTION 339—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 2017 AS “NATIONAL RUNAWAY PREVENTION MONTH”

Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 339

Whereas the prevalence of runaway youth and homelessness among youth is staggering, with studies suggesting that every year, between 1,600,000 and 2,800,000 youth live on the streets of the United States;

Whereas runaway youth most often are youth who have been expelled from their homes by their families, have experienced abuse and trauma, are involved in the foster care system, are too poor to secure their own basic needs, and may be ineligible or unable to access medical or mental health resources;

Whereas youth who run away are at an increased risk for exploitation and exposure to criminal networks, such as domestic sex trafficking;

Whereas youth who run away are more likely to be recruited or coerced into participating in criminal acts, such as gangs and illegal substance abuse, that lead to a higher likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system;

Whereas preventing youth from running away from home or from foster care and supporting youth in high-risk situations is a

family, community, and national responsibility;

Whereas the future well-being of the Nation is dependent on the value placed on youth and the opportunities provided for youth to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to help youth successfully develop into safe, healthy, and productive adults;

Whereas effective programs supporting runaway youth and assisting youth and their families in providing safe and stable homes succeed because of partnerships created among families, youth-based advocacy organizations, community-based human service agencies, law enforcement, schools, faith-based organizations, and businesses; and

Whereas the National Network for Youth and National Runaway Safeline are cosponsoring National Runaway Prevention Month in November to increase public awareness of the issues facing runaway and homeless youth and to educate the public about solutions and the role the public can play in ending youth homelessness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates November 2017 as “National Runaway Prevention Month”; and

(2) recognizes and supports the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 340—COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 3D INFANTRY DIVISION

Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 340

Whereas November 21, 2017, is the 100th anniversary of the organization of the 3d Infantry Division;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division was organized in 1917 as the 3d Division, with headquarters at Camp Greene in North Carolina, and has been on continuous duty ever since;

Whereas, from its inception, the 3d Infantry Division and the component units of the 3d Infantry Division have played a vital role in the history of the United States by serving in—

(1) World War I;

(2) World War II;

(3) the Korean War;

(4) the Cold War;

(5) Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (commonly known as “the Persian Gulf War”);

(6) Operation Enduring Freedom;

(7) Operation Iraqi Freedom;

(8) Operation Freedom’s Sentinel;

(9) Operation Resolute Support;

(10) Operation Atlantic Resolve; and

(11) a number of other named and unnamed operations around the world;

Whereas elements of the 3d Division first went into combat in March 1918 at the beginning of the German offensive efforts that were designed to end World War I;

Whereas, soon after the 3d Division was established, the division began to gain prestige for its service during World War I;

Whereas, in July of 1918, the success of the 3d Division at the Battle of Chateau-Thierry earned the division, and especially the 38th Infantry of the division, the legendary nickname “Rock of the Marne” because the division held steadfast against German soldiers who were marching toward Paris in what would be the last German offensive of World War I;

Whereas, during the Battle of Chateau-Thierry, division commander Major General

Joseph Dickman gave his famous order to hold the defensive position along the Marne River in French, stating, “Nous resterons là!”, which in English means, “We shall remain here!”, providing what would become the official motto of the 3d Division;

Whereas the 3d Division played an important role in other major campaigns of World War I, including the campaigns of—

- (1) Aisne;
- (2) Champagne-Marne;
- (3) Aisne-Marne;
- (4) Saint-Mihiel; and
- (5) Meuse-Argonne;

Whereas 2 soldiers of the 3d Division, Private First Class John L. Barkley and First Lieutenant George Price Hays, earned the Medal of Honor during World War I;

Whereas, after World War I, the 3d Division was one of only 3 divisions of the Army to remain on active duty, a strong testament to the steadfastness, combat experience, and mission success of the division;

Whereas the 3d Division was redesignated as the 3d Infantry Division in 1942;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division was again called into action in November of 1942, entering World War II as one of the first divisions of the United States to fight the Nazi empire in north Africa;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division made an amphibious landing in French Morocco and quickly captured the city of Casablanca, distinguishing itself as one of the premier assault units of the Army;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division advanced through Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia before participating in the amphibious assault on Sicily;

Whereas, during the campaign to take control of Sicily, and before moving to mainland Italy, the 3d Infantry Division earned a reputation as one of the best divisions in the Seventh Army under the command of Lieutenant General George Patton;

Whereas, between January and May of 1943, the 3d Infantry Division participated in an amphibious assault operation and beachhead defense at Anzio on the West Coast of Italy, repelling multiple attacks by 3 German divisions, fighting valiantly, and, on 1 day, suffering 995 casualties, once again proving to be a steadfast “Rock”;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division, after breaking out of the Anzio beachhead and reaching Rome, participated in Operation Dragoon, the Allied invasion of southern France;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division, after months of intense fighting, entered Germany and crossed the Rhine River, making its way through Nuremberg, Munich, and Salzburg before assisting in the capture of Adolf Hitler’s mountain retreat near Berchtesgaden in April of 1945;

Whereas, as of the date on which Germany unconditionally surrendered in May of 1945, the 3d Infantry Division had suffered 35,000 casualties during World War II, while fighting and marching 3,200 miles from Casablanca to Salzburg;

Whereas, during World War II, the 3d Infantry Division was the only division of the United States to serve in 10 major campaigns, specifically the campaigns of—

- (1) Algeria-French Morocco;
- (2) Tunisia;
- (3) Sicily;
- (4) Naples-Foggia;
- (5) Anzio;
- (6) Rome-Arno;
- (7) southern France;
- (8) Rhineland;
- (9) Ardennes-Alsace; and
- (10) Central Europe;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during World War II, the 3d Infantry Division was awarded—

(1) the French Croix de Guerre with Palm (and streamer embroidered with “Colmar”);

(2) the French Fourragere, for seizing the last Nazi stronghold in France; and

(3) the Presidential Unit Citation;

Whereas, during World War II, 39 soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division earned the Medal of Honor;

Whereas one of the most decorated soldiers of World War II, Lieutenant Audie Murphy, served in the 3d Infantry Division;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division was again called to service in September of 1950 when the first elements of the division arrived on the Korean Peninsula in support of the Government of the Republic of Korea and its military, contributing to operations in Hamhung-Hungnam in 1950 and the recapture of the South Korean capital of Seoul in 1951, following the surge of Chinese troops;

Whereas, from November 30 to December 24, 1950, the 3d Infantry Division served as the covering force for the largest beachhead evacuation in the history of the military of the United States, facilitating the escape of 105,000 troops, 91,000 refugees, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of cargo from Hungnam, after which the division moved from the East Coast to the West Coast of South Korea and helped to fight back the Chinese forces that had overtaken Seoul;

Whereas, in 1951, elements of the 3d Infantry Division helped to recapture Seoul and were instrumental in pushing Chinese forces back to the 38th parallel and in enduring the brunt of Chinese attempted attacks to retake Seoul, earning the division the new nickname, the “Rock of Seoul”;

Whereas, during the Korean War, the 3d Infantry Division also became known as the “Fire Brigade” for its quick responses to crises;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division participated in 8 campaigns during the Korean War and had 13 Medal of Honor recipients as a result of that service;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during the Korean War, the 3d Infantry Division and its subordinate units received—

- (1) the Presidential Unit Citation;
- (2) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation (and streamer embroidered with “Uijongbu Corridor”);
- (3) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation (and streamer embroidered with “Iron Triangle”); and
- (4) the Chryssoun Aristion Andrias-Bravery Gold Medal of Greece (and streamer embroidered with “Korea”);

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division returned to Germany in April 1958 to help secure Western Europe from the threat of attack by the nations, headed by the Soviet Union, that had signed the Warsaw Pact and remained stationed in Germany until 1996 to assist fellow member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (referred to in this preamble as “NATO”), directly contributing to the peaceful end of the Cold War;

Whereas, in December 1990, in response to the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, the 3d Brigade of the 3d Infantry Division deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield;

Whereas the 3d Brigade of the 3d Infantry Division distinguished itself as the Advanced Guard Brigade leading the main attack of the 1st Armored Division and VII Corps against the Iraqi Republican Guard Forces Command as part of the 100-hour ground assault on Iraq from February 24 to 28, 1991;

Whereas, as of the date on which the Persian Gulf War ended, the 3d Brigade of the 3d Infantry Division had, during that conflict, destroyed 105 enemy tanks, 70 armored personnel carriers, and 92 artillery pieces and captured 836 prisoners;

Whereas, from 2000 to 2001, elements of the 3d Infantry Division deployed to Bosnia and Kosovo in support of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (commonly known as “UNMIBH”);

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division began its participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom on March 20, 2003, leading the coalition assault into Iraq;

Whereas, as of April 4, 2003, the 3d Infantry Division had entered the Saddam International Airport and renamed it the Baghdad International Airport;

Whereas, from April 5 to 9, 2003, the 3d Infantry Division was the vanguard unit in the march to Baghdad, leading what would become known as the “Thunder Run” into the heart of the city and effectively crippling the Iraqi regime;

Whereas, from January 2005 to January 2006, the 3d Infantry Division returned to Iraq to provide security for independent elections and the peaceful transfer of power to newly and democratically elected Iraqi officials;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 3d Infantry Division was the first Army brigade to serve 3 tours in Iraq;

Whereas, in March 2007, as part of Task Force Marne, the 3d Infantry Division was given a large area of responsibility in Iraq, including Multi-National Forces-Center and Multi-National Forces-West;

Whereas Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in Iraq in 2003;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division had units in every region of Iraq;

Whereas, in November 2009, the Combat Aviation Brigade of the 3d Infantry Division deployed to Afghanistan as Task Force Falcon;

Whereas, in 2012, the 3d Infantry Division deployed to Afghanistan in support of operations in Regional Command-South, assisting with the closure of more than 60 forward operating bases and providing support to various units in the theater of operation;

Whereas, in 2015, multiple units of the 3d Infantry Division deployed to Europe in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve, training with NATO allies to remain prepared for contingency operations in Europe;

Whereas, as of 2017, a contingent of 3d Infantry Division soldiers serve in Afghanistan in support of Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, taking on the train and assist mission as the United States Forces-Afghanistan’s National Support Element alongside Afghan National Security Forces;

Whereas, as of 2017, the 3d Infantry Division is still a premier fighting force with units deployed in support of contingency operations across 4 distinct combatant command areas of responsibility in more than 20 countries and under 5 separate named operations, including Operation Resolute Support in Iraq, Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan, and Operation Atlantic Resolve in Eastern Europe;

Whereas the 3d Infantry Division has been honorably stationed in Fort Stewart, Georgia, since fiscal year 1996; and

Whereas, since 1917, the 3d Infantry Division has—

- (1) been deployed around the world, assisting in combat and noncombat missions;
- (2) endured the loss of more than 10,000 soldiers in combat operations; and
- (3) had 55 soldiers receive the Medal of Honor, a greater number than from any other division; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the 100th anniversary of the 3d Infantry Division on November 21, 2017, and reveres its century of service to the military of the United States;

(2) applauds the 3d Infantry Division for continuing to serve with one of the most successful combat records of any division of the Army;

(3) commends the 3d Infantry Division for continuing to exemplify its motto, “Nous resterons là!”, which in English means, “We shall remain here!”;

(4) honors—

(A) the memory of the more than 10,000 soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the United States; and

(B) the 55 members of the 3d Infantry Division who have received the Medal of Honor, a greater number than from any other division of the Army;

(5) expresses, on behalf of the people of the United States, gratitude, support, and commitment to all 3d Infantry Division soldiers, veterans, and families, both past and present; and

(6) recognizes the esteemed place of the 3d Infantry Division in the annals of the history of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 341—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING NOVEMBER 13, 2017, AS “NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK”

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary :

S. RES. 341

Whereas a highly skilled workforce is necessary to compete in the global economy and to support economic growth;

Whereas the national registered apprenticeship system established by the Act of August 16, 1937 (29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”) (referred to in this preamble as the “national registered apprenticeship system”), which has existed for over 75 years—

(1) is an important pathway for workers of the United States;

(2) offers a combination of—

(A) academic and technical instruction; and

(B) paid, on-the-job, training;

(3) provides workers of the United States credentials that are nationally-recognized and industry-recognized;

(4) leads to higher earnings for apprentices; and

(5) develops a highly skilled workforce for the United States;

Whereas registered apprenticeships—

(1) are becoming increasingly innovative and diverse in—

(A) design;

(B) partnerships;

(C) timeframes; and

(D) use of emerging educational and training concepts; and

(2) will continue to—

(A) evolve to meet emerging skill essentials and employer requirements; and

(B) maintain high standards for apprentices;

Whereas the national registered apprenticeship system provides education and training for apprentices in—

(1) high-growth sectors, including—

(A) information technology;

(B) financial services;

(C) advanced manufacturing; and

(D) health care; and

(2) traditional industries;

Whereas, according to the Department of Labor, the national registered apprenticeship system leverages approximately \$1,000,000,000 in private investment, which re-

flects the strong commitment of the sponsors of the national registered apprenticeship system;

Whereas an evaluation of registered apprenticeship programs in 10 States conducted by Mathematica Policy Research in 2012 found that—

(1) individuals who completed registered apprenticeship programs earned over \$240,000 more over their careers than individuals who did not participate in registered apprenticeship programs;

(2) the estimated social benefits of each registered apprenticeship program (including additional productivity of apprentices and the reduction in governmental expenditures as a result of reduced use of unemployment compensation and public assistance) exceeded the costs of each registered apprenticeship program by more than \$49,000; and

(3) the tax return on every dollar the Federal Government invested in registered apprenticeship programs was \$27; and

Whereas celebration of National Apprenticeship Week—

(1) honors industries that use the registered apprenticeship model;

(2) encourages expansion of the registered apprenticeship model to prepare highly skilled workers of the United States;

(3) recognizes the role the national registered apprenticeship system has played in preparing workers of the United States for jobs; and

(4) promotes conversation about ways the national registered apprenticeship system can continue to respond to workforce challenges in the 21st century: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates the week beginning November 13, 2017, as “National Apprenticeship Week”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT STATES, CITIES, TRIBAL NATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES SHOULD WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 342

Whereas 197 countries have signed the Paris Agreement, and 170 countries have joined the Paris Agreement;

Whereas the United States is the only country with the intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement;

Whereas the economy of the United States grew by 15 percent between 2005 and 2015 while net greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 11.5 percent during that period;

Whereas 30 States have adopted renewable electricity standard requirements to demand clean energy production;

Whereas 20 States have adopted greenhouse gas emissions targets;

Whereas 20 States have adopted energy efficiency resource standards;

Whereas 10 States have adopted zero-emission vehicle targets;

Whereas 9 States have implemented the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to construct a market-based system that sets a cap on emissions from the electric sector that declines by—

(1) 2.5 percent per year through 2020; and
(2) 3 percent per year from 2021 through 2030;

Whereas additional States may also soon join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative;

Whereas 11 States have approved at least 1 energy efficiency standard for appliances or equipment that are not covered by Federal standards;

Whereas 47 cities in the United States have adopted 100 percent clean and renewable energy goals;

Whereas more than 2,500,000 people in the United States work in clean energy in all 50 States, including in industries relating to—

(1) wind energy;

(2) solar energy;

(3) energy efficiency; and

(4) advanced hybrid electric vehicles;

Whereas by 2020 there will be 500,000 people in the United States working in the solar and wind industries, including roofers, electricians, and steel workers;

Whereas the majority of clean energy jobs in the United States are blue collar jobs that pay well;

Whereas the “2017 U.S. Energy and Employment Report” issued by the Department of Energy found that there are 5 times as many people in the United States working in the renewable energy sector than there are people in the United States working in fossil fuel industries;

Whereas the establishment of vehicle fuel economy emissions standards—

(1) is the single most significant action that has been taken to reduce global warming pollution;

(2) has helped create 700,000 domestic jobs in the automobile industry of the United States since 2009;

(3) will save consumers in the United States a total of \$100,000,000,000 at the gas pump; and

(4) will reduce the reliance of the United States on foreign oil by 2,500,000 barrels per day by 2030;

Whereas the States, cities, Tribal nations, businesses, and institutions of higher education of the United States that support the objectives of the Paris Agreement represent more than half of the economy of the United States; and

Whereas millions of dollars for clean energy and climate change adaptation resiliency in developing countries have been provided by the United States through contributions that are—

(1) private, public, and Federal; and

(2) made directly, bilaterally, and through multilateral institutions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States—

(1) should remain a signatory to the Paris Agreement; and

(2) should support policies at the Federal, State, and local level that promote the reduction of global warming pollution and aim to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 30—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD TIBET AND THAT THE TREATMENT OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE CONDUCT OF UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr.

GARDNER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 30

Whereas, on October 17, 2007, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama (in this resolution referred to as the “Dalai Lama”) was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his many enduring and outstanding contributions to peace, nonviolence, human rights, and religious understanding;

Whereas, during his Congressional Gold Medal acceptance speech, Dalai Lama stated, “The time has come for our dialogue with the Chinese leadership to progress towards the successful implementation of a meaningful autonomy for Tibet, as guaranteed in the Chinese constitution and detailed in the Chinese State Council ‘White Paper on Regional Ethnic Autonomy of Tibet’.”;

Whereas the Dalai Lama continues to advance the goal of greater understanding, tolerance, harmony, and respect among the different religious faiths of the world through interfaith dialogue and outreach to other religious leaders;

Whereas the Dalai Lama continues to use his moral authority to promote the concept of universal responsibility as a guiding tenet for how human beings should treat one another and the planet we share;

Whereas, in the ten years since the Dalai Lama accepted the Congressional Gold Medal, China has implemented increasingly repressive policies in Tibet, including—

- (1) travel restrictions against Tibetans and United States citizens;
- (2) restrictive regulations on religious affairs;
- (3) censorship of Buddhist literature and information;
- (4) demolition of Tibetan Buddhist sites;
- (5) imprisonment of Tibetan prisoners of conscience; and
- (6) declarations that “Decision-making power over the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and over the end of survival of his lineage resides with the central government of China”;

Whereas, on April 15, 2015, the Chinese State Council released a white paper entitled “Tibet’s Path of Development Is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide”, which stated that “there is no prospect of [a high degree of autonomy for Tibet] ever coming to pass” and furthermore stated that Tibet had been part of China “since ancient times”;

Whereas in recent years, Tibetan nomads, who have lived as nomadic herders on the Tibetan Plateau for centuries, have been banned from grazing in certain areas of the Tibetan Plateau, and hundreds of Tibetan herders have been forcibly relocated by Chinese government officials into “socialist villages”;

Whereas, in September 2017, the Government of the People’s Republic of China adopted additional restrictive regulations on governmental control over the practice of religion and expressed an intention that the government should “actively guide religion to fit within socialist society”;

Whereas these 2017 regulations state that “religious groups, religious schools, religious activity sites and religious citizens shall abide by the Constitution, laws, regulations and rules; practice the core socialist values; [and] preserve the unification of the country, ethnic unity and religious harmony and social stability”;

Whereas these 2017 regulations, scheduled for implementation by the Government of the People’s Republic of China beginning February 2018, would explicitly ban unregistered religious groups from teaching about

religion, establishing religious colleges, going abroad to take part in religious training or gatherings, or otherwise engage in activities that “endanger national security”;

Whereas the Department of State stated in the 2016 Report on Tibet Negotiations that “[t]he Dalai Lama’s representatives and Chinese officials from the United Front Work Department have not met directly since the ninth round of dialogue in January 2010”;

Whereas the 2016 International Religious Freedom Report for China published by the Department of State stated, “In the [Tibet Autonomous Region] and other Tibetan areas, authorities engaged in widespread interference in religious practices, especially in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and nunneries.”;

Whereas the 2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for China published by the Department of State stated, “Under the professed objectives of controlling border areas, maintaining social stability, combating separatism, and extracting natural resources, the government engaged in the severe repression of Tibet’s unique religious, cultural, and linguistic heritage by, among other means, strictly curtailing the civil rights of the Tibetan population, including the freedoms of speech, religion, association, assembly, and movement.”;

Whereas, since 2009, 150 Tibetans have self-immolated to protest against China’s rule in Tibet and most Tibetans publicly call for the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet;

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China has refused to allow an independent investigation into the causes of the self-immolations and has instead criminalized them, by imprisoning the survivors and collectively punishing the relatives, friends, and villagers of the self-immolators, as documented by the International Campaign for Tibet;

Whereas Congress has a long history of support for Tibet, including—

- (1) declaring that the United States should make the Tibet issue a higher policy priority;
- (2) declaring that the United States should urge China to establish a constructive dialogue with the Dalai Lama;
- (3) requiring Voice of America and Radio Free Asia to begin broadcasts in the Tibetan language;
- (4) mandating that Tibet be listed separately in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights published by the Department of State;
- (5) requiring a report from the Department of State on the state of negotiations between the representatives of the Tibetan people and the Government of the People’s Republic of China;
- (6) establishing educational and cultural exchange programs with Tibet;
- (7) providing humanitarian, food, medical, vocational training, primary and secondary education, and other assistance to Tibetan refugees;
- (8) funding programs to promote and preserve Tibetan culture and the resilience of Tibetan communities in India and Nepal;
- (9) funding a scholarship program for Tibetan refugees to study in the United States;
- (10) providing assistance to non-governmental organizations working to preserve the Tibetan environment and cultural traditions; and
- (11) appropriating funds for National Endowment for Democracy programs related to Tibet;

Whereas section 901(b)(6) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101-246; 104 Stat. 80) stated that United States policy toward China should be explicitly linked with the situation in Tibet, specifically including —

(1) lifting martial law in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet;

(2) opening Tibet to foreigners, including the press and international human rights organizations;

(3) releasing Tibetan political prisoners; and

(4) conducting negotiations between representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Government of the People’s Republic of China;

Whereas the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (subtitle B of title VI of Public Law 107-228; 22 U.S.C. 6901 note), signed into law on September 30, 2002—

(1) established United States principles with respect to human rights, religious freedom, political prisoners, and economic development projects in Tibet;

(2) established in statute the position of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues in the Department of State;

(3) established annual reporting requirements on Sino-Tibetan negotiations and safeguarding Tibet’s distinct cultural identity, both by the Secretary of State and by the congressionally established Congressional-Executive Commission on China;

(4) mandated the provision of Tibetan language training to interested foreign service officers;

(5) required Federal officials to raise issues of religious freedom and political prisoners; and

(6) urged the Secretary of State to seek establishment of an office in Lhasa; and

Whereas it is in line with United States national security interests and values to oppose China’s increasingly repressive policies toward Tibet and work towards a negotiated solution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring). That it is the sense of Congress that it should be the policy of the United States to—

(1) make the treatment of the Tibetan people an important factor in the conduct of United States relations with the People’s Republic of China;

(2) consistent with the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (subtitle B of title VI of Public Law 107-228; 22 U.S.C. 6901 note)—

(A) encourage the Government of the People’s Republic of China to enter into a dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives leading to a negotiated agreement with respect to Tibet;

(B) publicly call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those held prisoner for expressing their political or religious views in the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas; and

(C) establish an office in Lhasa, Tibet, to assist visiting United States citizens and to monitor political, economic, and cultural developments in Tibet;

(3) appoint the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues at the rank of Under Secretary of State;

(4) revoke appropriate privileges of any Chinese official found to be responsible for impeding access of United States citizens, including Tibetan-Americans, to Tibet and ensure that reciprocal visa processing measures are occurring in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Department of State;

(5) continue to designate China as a country of particular concern pursuant to section 402 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)); and

(6) engage with appropriate officials of the Government of the People’s Republic of China to—

(A) stop the demolition of Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions;

(B) revise religious and travel regulations to conform with international human rights standards; and

(C) ensure that Tibetan nomads are allowed to continue their way of life on the Tibetan Plateau, which they have helped to preserve for centuries, and are not forcibly relocated into "socialist villages".

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1586. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. McCain) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 279, reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1586. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. McCain) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 279, reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia; as follows:

In the preamble, strike the tenth *whereas* clause and insert the following:

Whereas the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and other nongovernmental organizations that advance United States policy objectives abroad have a long history in Cambodia and respect unique cultural, historical, and religious differences when promoting policies, engaging local partners, and building capacity for civil society, democracy, and good governance;

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 12 p.m., in SR-216 to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: John C. Rood, of Arizona, to be Under Secretary for Policy, and Randall G. Schriver, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary, both of the Department of Defense.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 10 a.m., in SH-216 to conduct a hearing on the bill entitled "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November

16, 2017, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 to conduct a hearing on S. 2070 and the following nominations: Leonard Steven Grasz, of Nebraska, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, Terry A. Doughty, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, Terry Fitzgerald Moorer, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Alabama, Mark Saalfeld Norris, Sr., to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee, and Scott W. Brady, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and Andrew E. Lelling, to be United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts for the term of four years, both of the Department of Justice.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 2 p.m., in SH-219 to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OCEANS, ATMOSPHERE, FISHERIES, AND COAST GUARD

The Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 10 a.m., in SR-253 to conduct closed hearing entitled "Coast Guard Readiness: How Far Can We Stretch Our Nation's Only Multi-Mission, Military."

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Abby Hollenstein and Laura Nowell, law clerks at the Judiciary Committee, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REAFFIRMING THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE RULE OF LAW IN CAMBODIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 257, S. Res. 279.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 279) reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in *italic*, and with an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in *italic*, as follows:

S. RES. 279

Whereas Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia since 1985 and is the longest-serving leader in Southeast Asia;

Whereas the Paris Peace Accords in 1991 provided a vital framework, supported by the international community, intended to help Cambodia undertake a transition to democracy, including through elections and multiparty government;

Whereas the United States Government, for more than 25 years, has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in development aid and other types of assistance to the people of Cambodia and funded work in areas including civil society, capacity building for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), global health, and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal;

Whereas, despite decades of international attention and assistance to promote a pluralistic, multi-party democratic system in Cambodia, the Government of Cambodia continues to be undemocratically dominated by the ruling Cambodia People's Party (CPP), which controls every agency and security apparatus of the state;

Whereas the leadership of Cambodia's security forces, including all of its top military and police commanders, sit on the Central Committee of the Politburo of the CPP;

Whereas the CPP controls Cambodia's parliament and can pass legislation without any opposition, and has often passed laws that benefit its rule and weaken the capacity of the opposition to challenge it;

Whereas each of the five elections that have taken place in Cambodia since 1991 were not conducted in circumstances that were free and fair, and each were marked by fraud, intimidation, violence, and the government's misuse of legal mechanisms to weaken opposition candidates and parties;

Whereas, in 2015, the CPP-controlled parliament passed the "Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations", known as LANGO, which gave the government sweeping powers to revoke the registration of NGOs found to be operating with a political bias in a blatant attempt to restrict the legitimate work of civil society;

Whereas, since the passage of LANGO, the Interior Ministry has announced that it was surveilling several civil society organizations and their employees for allegedly aiding Cambodia's opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP);

Whereas both the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) have a long history in Cambodia, engaging local partners and building capacity for civil society, democracy, and good governance;

Whereas, on August 23, 2017, Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered the closure of NDI and the expulsion of its foreign staff on allegations that it had violated LANGO and was conspiring against Prime Minister Hun Sen;

Whereas, on September 15, 2017, Prime Minister Hun Sen called for the withdrawal of all volunteers from the United States Peace Corps, which has operated in Cambodia since 2006 with 500 United States volunteers providing English language and healthcare training;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia in 2016 arrested four senior staff members of the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), as well as a former ADHOC staff member and official on the National Election Committee (NEC), and held them in pre-trial detention for 427 days until released on bail on June 29, 2017, in the wake of sustained international pressure;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia arrested activist and women's rights defender Tep Vanny in August 2016 and has kept her in prison for over a year;

Whereas the prominent Cambodian political commentator Kem Ley was assassinated on July

10, 2016, five days after a senior Cambodian general publicly called on the Cambodian Armed Forces to “eliminate and dispose of” anyone “fomenting social turmoil” in Cambodia;

Whereas Kem Ley had been a frequent critic of Prime Minister Hun Sen, fueling concerns that his killing was politically motivated and ordered by higher authorities;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia has taken several measures to restrict its media environment, including imposing a tax bill amounting to millions of dollars levied against independent media outlets that resulted in the closure of independent newspaper *The Cambodian Daily* in early September 2017;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia has ordered several radio stations to stop the broadcasting of Radio Free Asia and Voice of America;

Whereas the next general election in Cambodia is scheduled for July 29, 2018, and the CPP continues to use intimidation and misuse of legal mechanisms to weaken political opposition and media organizations in order to retain its power;

Whereas the Cambodian parliament in 2017 passed two repressive amendments to Cambodia’s Law on Political Parties that allow authorities to dissolve political parties and ban party leaders from political activity, and which contain numerous restrictions tailored to create obstacles for opposition parties in an attempt to maintain the CPP’s hold on power;

Whereas Kem Sokha, the President of CNRP, was arrested on September 3, 2017, and charged with treason and conspiring with the United States Government to overthrow the Government of Cambodia, and if convicted faces up to 30 years in prison, which sets the stage for the CNRP to be dissolved;

Whereas the United States Embassy in Cambodia has publicly called for the immediate release of Mr. Sokha and the removal of restrictions on civil society;

Whereas the CNRP’s previous leader, Sam Rainsy, remains in exile due to an outstanding warrant for his arrest in a politically motivated criminal case;

Whereas Human Rights Watch reported that local elections held in Cambodia on June 4, 2017, took place in a “threatening environment hostile to free speech and genuine political participation, leading to elections that were neither free nor fair”;

Whereas international election monitoring groups reported fundamental flaws in the electoral process and violations of Cambodia’s election campaign rules during June’s local election;

Whereas the Interior Ministry of Cambodia demanded that two election-monitoring organizations cease their activities just months after the local elections for allegedly violating the LANGO law, which will allow the CPP to continue to increase restrictions on election monitoring as the 2018 national elections approach;

Whereas, despite irregularities in the electoral process, the CNRP made significant gains in local elections compared to previous cycles, making clear that national elections in 2018, if they are conducted freely and fairly, will be tightly contested; and

Whereas national elections in 2018 will be closely watched to ensure openness and fairness, and to monitor whether all political parties and civil society groups are allowed to freely participate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,
That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia;

(2) condemns all forms of political violence in Cambodia, and urges the cessation of ongoing human rights violations;

(3) urges Prime Minister Hun Sen and the Cambodian People’s Party to end all harassment and intimidation of Cambodia’s opposition and

foster an environment where democracy can thrive and flourish;

(4) urges the Department of the Treasury, in consultation with the Department of State, to consider placing all senior Cambodian government officials implicated in the abuses noted above on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list;

(5) urges the Government of Cambodia to free Mr. Kem Sokha immediately and unconditionally;

(6) calls on the Government of Cambodia to respect freedom of the press and the rights of its citizens to freely assemble, protest, and speak out against the government; and

(7) supports electoral reform efforts in Cambodia and free and fair elections in 2018 monitored by international observers.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the McCain amendment at the desk be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 279), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1586) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To acknowledge the contributions of nongovernmental organizations in Cambodia)

In the preamble, strike the tenth whereas clause and insert the following:

Whereas the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and other nongovernmental organizations that advance United States policy objectives abroad have a long history in Cambodia and respect unique cultural, historical, and religious differences when promoting policies, engaging local partners, and building capacity for civil society, democracy, and good governance;

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 279

Whereas Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia since 1985 and is the longest-serving leader in Southeast Asia;

Whereas the Paris Peace Accords in 1991 provided a vital framework, supported by the international community, intended to help Cambodia undertake a transition to democracy, including through elections and multiparty government;

Whereas the United States Government, for more than 25 years, has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in development aid and other types of assistance to the people of Cambodia and funded work in areas including civil society, capacity building for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), global health, and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal;

Whereas despite decades of international attention and assistance to promote a pluralistic, multi-party democratic system in Cambodia, the Government of Cambodia con-

tinues to be undemocratically dominated by the ruling Cambodia People’s Party (CPP), which controls every agency and security apparatus of the state;

Whereas the leadership of Cambodia’s security forces, including all of its top military and police commanders, sit on the Central Committee of the Politburo of the CPP;

Whereas the CPP controls Cambodia’s parliament and can pass legislation without any opposition, and has often passed laws that benefit its rule and weaken the capacity of the opposition to challenge it;

Whereas each of the five elections that have taken place in Cambodia since 1991 were not conducted in circumstances that were free and fair, and each were marked by fraud, intimidation, violence, and the government’s misuse of legal mechanisms to weaken opposition candidates and parties;

Whereas in 2015, the CPP-controlled parliament passed the “Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations”, known as LANGO, which gave the government sweeping powers to revoke the registration of NGOs found to be operating with a political bias in a blatant attempt to restrict the legitimate work of civil society;

Whereas since the passage of LANGO, the Interior Ministry has announced that it was surveilling several civil society organizations and their employees for allegedly aiding Cambodia’s opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP);

Whereas the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and other nongovernmental organizations that advance United States policy objectives abroad have a long history in Cambodia and respect unique cultural, historical, and religious differences when promoting policies, engaging local partners, and building capacity for civil society, democracy, and good governance;

Whereas, on August 23, 2017, Cambodia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered the closure of NDI and the expulsion of its foreign staff on allegations that it had violated LANGO and was conspiring against Prime Minister Hun Sen;

Whereas, on September 15, 2017, Prime Minister Hun Sen called for the withdrawal of all volunteers from the United States Peace Corps, which has operated in Cambodia since 2006 with 500 United States volunteers providing English language and healthcare training;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia in 2016 arrested four senior staff members of the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), as well as a former ADHOC staff member and official on the National Election Committee (NEC), and held them in pre-trial detention for 427 days until released on bail on June 29, 2017, in the wake of sustained international pressure;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia arrested activist and women’s rights defender Tep Vanny in August 2016 and has kept her in prison for over a year;

Whereas the prominent Cambodian political commentator Kem Ley was assassinated on July 10, 2016, five days after a senior Cambodian general publicly called on the Cambodian Armed Forces to “eliminate and dispose of” anyone “fomenting social turmoil” in Cambodia;

Whereas Kem Ley had been a frequent critic of Prime Minister Hun Sen, fueling concerns that his killing was politically motivated and ordered by higher authorities;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia has taken several measures to restrict its media environment, including imposing a tax bill amounting to millions of dollars levied

against independent media outlets that resulted in the closure of independent newspaper The Cambodian Daily in early September 2017;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia has ordered several radio stations to stop the broadcasting of Radio Free Asia and Voice of America;

Whereas the next general election in Cambodia is scheduled for July 29, 2018, and the CPP continues to use intimidation and misuse of legal mechanisms to weaken political opposition and media organizations in order to retain its power;

Whereas the Cambodian parliament in 2017 passed two repressive amendments to Cambodia's Law on Political Parties that allow authorities to dissolve political parties and ban party leaders from political activity, and which contain numerous restrictions tailored to create obstacles for opposition parties in an attempt to maintain the CPP's hold on power;

Whereas Kem Sokha, the President of CNRP, was arrested on September 3, 2017, and charged with treason and conspiring with the United States Government to overthrow the Government of Cambodia, and if convicted faces up to 30 years in prison, which sets the stage for the CNRP to be dissolved;

Whereas the United States Embassy in Cambodia has publicly called for the immediate release of Mr. Sokha and the removal of restrictions on civil society;

Whereas the CNRP's previous leader, Sam Rainsy, remains in exile due to an outstanding warrant for his arrest in a politically motivated criminal case;

Whereas Human Rights Watch reported that local elections held in Cambodia on June 4, 2017, took place in a "threatening environment hostile to free speech and genuine political participation, leading to elections that were neither free nor fair";

Whereas international election monitoring groups reported fundamental flaws in the electoral process and violations of Cambodia's election campaign rules during June's local election;

Whereas the Interior Ministry of Cambodia demanded that two election-monitoring organizations cease their activities just months after the local elections for allegedly violating the LANGO law, which will allow the CPP to continue to increase restrictions on election monitoring as the 2018 national elections approach;

Whereas despite irregularities in the electoral process, the CNRP made significant gains in local elections compared to previous cycles, making clear that national elections in 2018, if they are conducted freely and fairly, will be tightly contested; and

Whereas national elections in 2018 will be closely watched to ensure openness and fairness, and to monitor whether all political parties and civil society groups are allowed to freely participate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia;

(2) condemns all forms of political violence in Cambodia, and urges the cessation of ongoing human rights violations;

(3) urges Prime Minister Hun Sen and the Cambodian People's Party to end all harassment and intimidation of Cambodia's opposition and foster an environment where democracy can thrive and flourish;

(4) urges the Department of the Treasury, in consultation with the Department of State, to consider placing all senior Cambodian government officials implicated in the abuses noted above on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list;

(5) urges the Government of Cambodia to free Mr. Kem Sokha immediately and unconditionally;

(6) calls on the Government of Cambodia to respect freedom of the press and the rights of its citizens to freely assemble, protest, and speak out against the government; and

(7) supports electoral reform efforts in Cambodia and free and fair elections in 2018 monitored by international observers.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 337, S. Res. 338, S. Res. 339, and S. Res. 340.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2017, THROUGH MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, November 17, at 11 a.m.; Tuesday, November 21, at 11 a.m.; Friday, November 24, at 11 a.m.; I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, November 24, it next convene at 4 p.m., Monday, November 27; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Friedrich nomination, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture motion filed on the Katsas nomination ripen following disposition of the Friedrich nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come be-

fore the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:45 p.m., adjourned until Friday, November 17, 2017, at 11 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

MELISSA F. BURNISON, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS), VICE BRADLEY CROWELL.

JOHN G. VONGLIS, OF NEW YORK, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, VICE JOSEPH S. HEZIR.

LINDA CAPUANO, OF TEXAS, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION, VICE ADAM E. SIEMINSKI.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHNNY COLLETT, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE MICHAEL K. YUDIN.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

MICHAEL K. ATKINSON, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE, VICE IRVIN CHARLES MCCULLOUGH III.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be colonel

RICHARD G. ADAMS
CHRISTOPHER PAUL BACA
GAVIN M. BATCHELDER
GEOFFREY O. BILLINGSLEY
FREDRIC LEE BLACK
MICHAEL M. BLAKE
BRIAN C. BOWMAN
ROBERT KYLE BRADY
STEVEN ANTHONY BREITFELDER
SEAN T. BRENNAN
MICHAEL S. BURK
RICHARD D. CARTER, JR.
MATTHEW W. CAUPELL
PATRICK D. CHARD
SCOTT MATTHEW CHARLTON
KEITH AKIRA CHIKASAWA
JEFFREY DAVID COATS
JEFFREY RUSSELL COLE
DAVID W. COMPTON
KEVIN ROBERT CURLEY
VINCENT E. CYRAN
JAMES L. DALTON
JAMES S. DINSMORE
GARY L. DODGE
FRANCISCO J. DOMINGUEZ
GEORGE HENRY DOWNS
MICHAEL N. DUGAS
JASON ROBERT FALLIS
ANDY FITTORRE
LAWRENCE R. FLANNIGAN
PATTI LYNN FRIES
KEVIN B. GEORGE
SCOTT RICHARD GILLOON
JOYCE M. GORDON
ERIC ALAN GUTTORMSEN
OLEN O. HARDEN
MILES K. HARKEY
STEPHEN J. HENSKE, JR.
SCOTT C. HUMPHREY
CHARLES HENRY HUTSON
PAUL EDUARDO JARA
CATHERINE MARIE JUMPER
NATHAN WILLIAM KEARNS
JASON WILLIAM KNIGHT
CHAD W. KORBERG
DANIEL J. KRAMER II
JEFFREY GYNN LAIBLE
LANSE ERIC LAVOY
JOSEPH J. LIBERT
BRIAN LEROY MANDT
KERRY JOHN MCCAULEY
WILLIAM D. MCCONNELL
ADAM STEWART MERCIER
CHRISTOPHER A. MILLER
MIRCEA A. MITRAN
TROY C. MORGAN
PAUL MICHAEL MORTON
CHARLES WESLEY NICHOLS, JR.
FRANCES RENEE OLEEN
HUMBERTO PABON, JR.
FAUSTO ALFREDO PADILLA
DANIEL J. POTAS
TIMOTHY A. PUZAN
ROBERT T. REDMAN
CHARLES D. RILEY

SEAN DELACY RILEY
LYNN K. ROBINSON, JR.
ANDY HAROLD ROWE
MARK W. RUANE
RICHARD A. RYMERSON
ESTHER CAMACHO SABLAN
SARAH ANN SHIRLEY
CHRISTOPHER ALLEN SNIDER
CHRISTOPHER JOHN SOUTHARD
EDWARD K. STAMPER, JR.
SHAWN R. STRECK
ANTHONY D. SULLINS Y
WILLIAM THOMAS TESCH
TRACE NOLAN THOMAS
STEVEN ELLIOTT TINDOLL
ELIZABETH TOPOL
RAYMOND JOSEPH TRAMPOSCH
GINGER DELAINE TURCOTTE
KENNETH E. VORIS
JEFFREY HOLT WALDMAN
LARRY J. WERBISKI
ADAM GARTH WIGGINS
JOSEPH F. ZINGARO

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

MELVIN J. NICKELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ERICA L. HERZOG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

ADAM W. VANEK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JASON PARK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JOHN T. HUCKABAY

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be captain

GEORGE BAMFORD
ERIC S. BERNSTEIN
RACHAEL B. BRALLIAR
TIMOTHY W. DECKER
GEOFFREY S. DEAS
BRIAN J. DUDLEY
RONZELLE L. GREEN
SCOTT C. HALE
RICHARD A. ROBERTS
TABITHA A. SCHIRO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

To be captain

STEPHEN J. ADLER
RICARDO M. ALONZO
BRIAN R. ANDERSON
EUGENIO S. ANZANO
JONATHAN D. BAKER
TIMOTHY J. BARELLI
LAMONT S. BASEMORE
KALLIE J. BENSON
SCOTT D. BENSON
JOHN D. BERRY
JED R. BOBA
SEAN T. BRADY
ANDREW S. BROWN
MATTHEW T. BROWN
TIMOTHY T. BROWN
SCOTT R. CALHOUN
WILLIE L. CARMICHAEL
ADAM A. CHAMIE
TIMOTHY P. CRONIN
QUINCY L. DAVIS
PATRICK J. DOUGAN
MICHAEL A. EDWARDS
ROY J. EIDEM
MICHAEL A. FAZIO
MICHAEL S. FREDIE
RILEY O. GATEWOOD
CHRISTOPHER L. GERMAN
MICHAEL P. GULDIN
TIMOTHY D. HAMMOND
KATHRYN N. HERTY
WALTER L. HORNE
ROBERT A. HUELLER
CHRISTOPHER J. HULSER

ANTHONY R. JONES
ADAM L. KERR
CHRISTIAN A. LEE
BRIAN J. LEFEBVRE
STEPHEN MATADOBRA
GREGORY A. MATYAS
JOHN F. MCCARTHY
PETER N. MELNICK
ANDREW D. MEVERDEN
DONALD P. MONTORO, JR.
JOE L. MORGAN, JR.
JONATHAN E. MUSMAN
PETER S. NILES II
BLAKE L. NOVAK
CRAIG M. OBRIEN
SEAN J. OBRIEN
DAVID E. OCONNELL
REBECCA E. ORE
MICHAEL J. PARADISE
ANDREW T. PECORA
TINA J. PENA
PATRICK F. PESCHKA
SCOTT T. PETEREIN
TRAVIS J. RASMUSSEN
KEVIN B. REED
ANTHONY L. RUSSELL
OLAV M. SABOE
JEREMY C. SMITH
VASILIOS TASIKAS
JONATHAN D. THEEL
MICHAEL A. TURDO
HEATHER K. TURNER
STEVEN P. WALSH
TODD D. VANCE
WILBORNE E. WATSON
ANTHONY W. WILLIAMS
JOHN A. WILLIAMS
TORRENCE B. WILSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

To be commander

LAWRENCE F. AHLIN
JONATHAN A. ALEXANDER
CRAIG H. ALLEN, JR.
MIKAEL D. ANDERSON
JENNIFER J. ANDREW
KARL M. ANFORTH
EDWARD S. APONTE
NEAL E. ARMSTRONG
RICHARD P. ARMSTRONG
MICHAEL P. ATTANASIO
MATTHEW S. BAKER
STEPHEN T. BAXTER
TODD M. BEHNEY
MALCOLM D. BELT
JAMES R. BENDLE
MICHAEL A. BENSON
TORREY H. BERTHEAU
BRYAN R. BLACKMORE
CHRISTOPHER W. BLOMSHIELD
JEFFREY S. BOGDANOVICH
JASON A. BOYER
ERIN M. BOYLE
JASON T. BOYLE
COREY A. BRADDOCK
MATTHEW J. BRECKEL
DEVON S. BRENNAN
MICHAEL D. BRIMBLECOM
COLLIN R. BRONSON
CHRISTOPHER D. BRUNCLIK
MARTIN J. BRYANT
JONATHAN W. BURBY
JOSHUA D. BURCH
MELANIE A. BURNHAM
ANDRES CAMARGO
JAMES J. CAMP
RONALD J. CAPUTO, JR.
TAYLOR J. CARLISLE
LUIS O. CARMONA
CHRISTY S. CASEY
GEORGE B. CASEY
EMILE F. COCHET III
BRIAN T. CONLEY
JAMES T. CORBETT
STACEY L. CRECY
CHRISTOPHER A. CULPEPPER
BIEN J. DECENA, JR.
AARON W. DELANO-JOHNSON
JEREMY R. DENNING
LINNEA V. DORN
SCOT R. DRUCKREY
TRAVIS M. EMGY
JOSHUA M. EMPEN
KERRY A. FELTNER
PATRICIA L. FERRELL
KRYSTYON N. FINCH
CHARLENE S. FORGUE
JASON S. FRANZ
BRETT A. FRELS
HSINGYEN J. FU
LISA L. GARCEZ
BRENDAN T. GAVIN
GLENN H. GOETCHIUS
BENJAMIN F. GOFF, JR.
JASON W. HAAG
BRENDAN J. HARRIS
LEE J. HARTSHORN
CHRISTIAN J. HERNAEZ
WHITNEY H. HOUCK
PETER J. IGOE
MARCUS A. IVERY
WESTON R. JAMES
VINCENT J. JANSEN
JAMES A. JENKS

JESSICA L. JOHNSON
LACRESHA A. JOHNSON
KEVIN T. KAROW
ROBIN H. KAWAMOTO
PAIGE A. KEENAN
BENJAMIN R. KEFFER
LUANN J. KEHLENBACH
BRENT G. KENNY
LYLE E. KESSLER
STEVEN A. KOCH
MATTHEW R. KOLODICA
JENNIFER M. KONON
ADAM J. KOZIATEK
CHRISTOPHER W. LAVIN
TIMOTHY J. LEE
KAREN R. LEYDET
CHRISTOPHER D. LUCERO
JEFFREY D. LYNCH
AARON J. MADER
THOMAS D. MANSELL
MATTHEW K. MATSUOKA
JOSEPH W. MATTHEWS
DOREEN MCCARTHY
JAMES F. MCCORMACK
DAVID M. MCCOWN
COLLEEN S. MCCUSKER
JAMES C. MCFERRAN V
CARRIE A. MCKINNEY
TERESA S. MCMANUS
JOHN B. MCWHITE
NATHAN S. MENELEE
MATTHEW J. MESKUN
ANTHONY R. MIGLIORINI
BORIS MONTATSKY
COMMANDER K. MOORE
JAMES K. MORROW, JR.
ERNESTO MUNIZTIRADO
RONALD T. NAKAMOTO
BENJAMIN J. NORRIS
JEREMY R. OBENCHAIN
JEFFREY P. OWENS
ERIC G. PARA
CHRISTOPHER R. PARRISH
MICHAEL C. PETTA
CATHERINE A. PHILLIPS
BEAU G. POWERS
KEVIN J. RAPP
EMILY P. REUTER
MARIA L. RICHARDSON
ROBERTO RIVERA
JOSHUA D. ROSE
JEFFREY H. RUBINI
NATHAN L. RUMSEY
JENNIFER M. RUNION
RICHARD C. SANSONE
ANDREW G. SCHANNO
BRENT R. SCHMADEKE
WILLIAM A. SCHRADER II
PAUL W. SCHURKE
GINO S. SCIORTINO, JR.
RAY A. SLAPKUNAS
ANDREA J. P. SMITH
FRANCES M. SMITH
JAKE M. SMITH
PAUL D. SMITH
JOHN A. SOUDERS V
LANE G. STEFFENHAGEN
STEVEN D. STOWERS
JONATHAN E. SULLIVAN
PATRICK M. SULLIVAN
NICHOLAS J. TABORI
VINCE Z. TAYLOR
BRIAN J. TESSON
JOSEPH G. THOMAS
ALLYSON M. THOMPSON
BRETT J. THOMPSON
JOHN K. TITCHEN
KRISTOFER A. TSAIRIS
CHRISTOPHER B. TUCKEY
MICHAEL O. VEGA
DAVID B. VICKS
JOHN E. WALSH IV
RICHARD B. WALSH
REBECCA A. WALTHOUR
MATTHEW G. WEBER
SHAY R. WILLIAMS
TIMOTHY J. WILLIAMS
TODD M. WIMMER
CARRIE A. S. WOLFE
MICHAEL D. WOLFE
CHRISTOPHER WOLFER
BRETT R. WORKMAN
NICHOLAS S. WORST
DAMIAN YEMMA
STEVEN M. YOUNG
CHRISTOPHER J. YOUNG
KYLE S. YOUNG
RUSSELL R. ZUCKERMAN

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 16, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BRENDA BURMAN, OF ARIZONA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF RECLAMATION.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

JOSEPH OTTING, OF NEVADA, TO BE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

THE JUDICIARY

DONALD C. COGGINS, JR., OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JOSEPH KERNAN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE.

GUY B. ROBERTS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

ROBERT L. WILKIE, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

JAMES THOMAS ABBOTT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020.

COLLEEN KIKO, OF NORTH DAKOTA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 29, 2022.

ERNEST W. DUBESTER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 1, 2019.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ROBERT BEHLER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

THOMAS B. MODLY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

JAMES F. GEURTS, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

ROBERT H. MCMAHON, OF GEORGIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

SHON J. MANASCO, OF TEXAS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REBECCA ELIZA GONZALES, OF TEXAS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO.

LISA A. JOHNSON, OF WASHINGTON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA.

IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

SEAN P. LAWLER, OF MARYLAND, TO BE CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, AND TO HAVE THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LISA-FELICIA AFI AKORLI AND ENDING WITH STEPHANIE P. WILSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 1, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOHN R. BASS II AND ENDING WITH SUNG Y. KIM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 1, 2017.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVITA
VANCE-COOKS' EXEMPLARY
SERVICE TO THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary contributions of Davita Vance-Cooks, the Director of the Government Publishing Office (GPO), both to this institution and to the American people, on the announcement of her retirement from Federal service. A seasoned business executive with over 35 years of private sector and Federal Government management experience, Ms. Vance-Cooks was nominated by President Obama in May of 2013 to serve as the 27th Public Printer of the United States and then swiftly confirmed by the Senate in July 2013. Upon her confirmation, she became the first woman and the first African-American to lead the GPO in the agency's more than 150 year history dating back to the Inauguration of President Abraham Lincoln. Ms. Vance-Cooks is a trailblazer in so many ways.

Her appointment to this prestigious position was well earned. Prior to her confirmation, Ms. Vance-Cooks had capably served as acting Public Printer for 19 months, the longest such tenure in GPO history, and in a number of senior management roles since she first joined the agency in 2004, including Chief of Staff, Deputy Public Printer, Deputy Managing Director of Customer Services, and Managing Director of Publications and Information sales.

Ms. Vance-Cooks' service to the GPO began at a time of great change and uncertainty at the agency, as information technology and digital media challenged GPO to move from a primarily print-centric focus to a more content-centric one. In her senior management positions, and then as the head of the GPO, Ms. Vance-Cooks helped guide a fundamental and comprehensive transformation of the agency.

She also articulated a vision for the future of the GPO as the Official, Digital, and Secure source for producing, protecting, preserving, and distributing the official publications and information products of the Federal Government in an age of rapid technological change. Today, thanks to her dedication, and that of so many committed GPO employees, that vision is being realized.

In recognition of the GPO's successful transition to digital publishing technologies that Ms. Vance-Cooks championed, Congress passed legislation to rename the agency that was signed into law in 2014. From that point forward, the Government Printing Office would be known as the Government Publishing Office to more accurately describe its capabilities in this age of digitization, and the anachronistic Public Printer title would be replaced as well. Ms. Vance-Cooks would subsequently serve as GPO's Director, the position from which she has retired this week.

The transformation Ms. Vance-Cooks helped lead at GPO was broad in scope, and the accomplishments she helped achieve are impressive. First and foremost, she leaves a legacy of cutting agency costs while improving services, and generating positive net income for the agency while modernizing its operations and expanding the availability of Government information to the public.

She oversaw the creation of a new, dynamic website, *govinfo.gov*, where over 2 million Federal titles are available free of charge to the general public, and spearheaded GPO's move to become the first legislative branch agency to move to cloud technology. Under her leadership, GPO also became a key participant in the Legislative Branch Bulk Data Task Force, working closely with legislative branch agencies to expand the transparency and openness of congressional information.

Her commitment to expanding the accessibility of GPO products also extended to the development of mobile applications, eBooks for GPO publications, the digitization of historical issues of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and the Federal Register, and the enhancement of GPO's relationship with its 1,100 partners in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Just this spring she offered testimony on how to strengthen that partnership by modernizing the laws that govern the FDLP.

Ms. Vance-Cooks also successfully executed an expansion of GPO's production capacity to incorporate the newest, state-of-the-art printing capabilities to deliver greater value to the American people. These enhancements have reduced the cost of printing congressional and agency documents, and provided GPO with the capability to produce next generation U.S. passports and secure identity cards for other Federal partners.

A strong believer in the importance of strategic planning, Ms. Vance-Cooks chartered a course for GPO that dramatically improved the agency's capabilities and productivity in a fiscally responsible way. Under her leadership, the agency reversed a previous decade-long pattern of requesting ever greater appropriations from Congress and achieved clean opinions from annual independent audits of its finances. It also endured an unprecedented 13-day shutdown of Federal operations without incident, and managed two employee buyouts that reduced GPO's total staffing to 1,700, the lowest level in more than a century.

It is a testament to Ms. Vance-Cooks' commitment to employee engagement that GPO was able to meet these challenges while maintaining a "best place to work" rating among Federal agencies and an "innovative agency" designation from the Partnership for Public Service. That commitment formed a bedrock principle of her leadership and was demonstrated in her quarterly town halls with GPO employees from each of the agency's three daily shifts. At each step of the way along the path of GPO's transformation, Ms. Vance-Cooks sought the support and input of GPO's dedicated workforce, and that collaborative approach paid enormous dividends.

There is no question that Davita Vance-Cooks provided transformative leadership at the Government Publishing Office, and that she rendered a great service to the Legislative Branch, the House of Representatives, and the American public. She should look back on her tenure with GPO with great pride, and we express our gratitude to her today. She will be missed, and I join the hardworking men and women of the GPO who thought so highly of her in wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on November 13, 2017, and November 14, 2017, I was absent from the House and missed Roll Call Votes 623 through 628. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

on Roll Call Vote 623, on passage of H. Res. 599, I would have voted No;

on Roll Call Vote 624, on passage of H.R. 3071, I would have voted Yes;

on Roll Call Vote 625, on approval of the journal, I would have voted No;

on Roll Call Vote 626, on ordering the previous question, I would have voted No;

on Roll Call Vote 627, on approval of H. Res. 616, I would have voted No; and

on Roll Call Vote 628, on approving the journal, I would have voted No.

RECOGNIZING THE DEEP AND
ABIDING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND
ISRAEL

HON. TOM GRAVES

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, which was one of the most pivotal moments in the founding of the state of Israel.

Yesterday, the House of Representatives approved a bipartisan resolution that I introduced with several of my colleagues to recognize this truly historic anniversary.

Passage of this resolution reaffirms our unbreakable bond with the nation of Israel—a bond this administration is committed to guarding and strengthening. Israel was the first country President Trump visited after he took office, and Vice President Pence is traveling to Israel next month, making this resolution especially timely.

As the Vice President works on several important issues on his trip, this resolution sends a clear message that the U.S. House strongly

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

supports our national partnership, the Vice President's trip and the nation of Israel.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues for their unanimous support of this resolution.

IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR UWE
REINHARDT

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Uwe Reinhardt, a leading health economist whose work has shaped health care policy. Professor Reinhardt passed away this week at the age of 80, leaving behind a legacy of scholarship and dedication.

Professor Reinhardt was a longtime member of Princeton University. He started in 1967 as an assistant professor before rising through the ranks to become the James Madison professor of political economy and professor of economics and public affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School.

Throughout his career, Professor Reinhardt became known as a leading expert in health economics. He served on the governing council of the Institute of Medicine and on the Physician Payment Review Commission, and won countless awards for his work.

Born in Germany in 1937, Professor Reinhardt later moved to Canada. He earned his bachelor of commerce degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1964, and his Ph.D. in economics from Yale University.

While I did not always agree with Professor Reinhardt, I always found him to be agreeable, and I always learned something from each encounter with him. He will be missed.

HONORING W. TERRY LINDLEY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize W. Terry Lindley for being honored as a distinguished community leader by Santa Rosa Junior College at their 2017 AgStravaganza.

Mr. Lindley was born and raised on a family ranch in Humboldt County. He graduated from Ferndale High School in 1976 and Santa Rosa Junior College in 1974. He retired earlier this year from American AgCredit where he was chief marketing officer and senior vice president. Mr. Lindley lives in Healdsburg, California with his wife, Misty. They have four children, Lily, Quincy, Abbi and Jake.

During his 40-year career at American AgCredit, Mr. Lindley became a respected leader in Sonoma County agriculture, business and education. Through his leadership and support, he has helped grow our agriculture education, advocacy and farm youth programs. Mr. Lindley has served many years on the board of trustees for Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) and is a longtime director of the SRJC Ag Trust Foundation, which raises

money to enhance the college's agricultural program and the 365 acre Shone Farm, where students gain hands-on experience in such fields as viticulture, livestock production and sustainable crop farming.

Mr. Lindley was instrumental in building the Saralee and Richard's Barn at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. The three million dollar "barn" is an agricultural center where students learn about the source of their food and Sonoma County's diverse agricultural community. Mr. Lindley is a major supporter of the 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA) and the Sonoma County Fair. He has provided scholarships to deserving agriculture students and is a major buyer of 4-H and FFA animals at the fair's Junior Livestock Auction.

Mr. Speaker, Terry Lindley has a strong work ethic and is a leader in our agriculture, business and educational communities. It is fitting and proper that we recognize him here today for his achievements.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, on October 3, 2017, I was unable to be present for the vote on the motion to recommit on H.R. 36, offered by Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Had I been present for Roll Call No. 548, I would have voted "AYE."

I was also unable to be present for the vote on passage of H.R. 36, offered by Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Had I been present for Roll Call No. 549, I would have voted "NAY."

I was also unable to be present for the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, S. 782 offered by Mr. CORNYN of Texas. Had I been present for Roll Call No. 550, I would have voted "AYE."

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL
PHILANTHROPY DAY

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the National Philanthropy Day Awards held on this day to honor the millions of great Americans across the country and around my district in Northwest Florida who selflessly dedicate their lives, time, money and talents for the benefit of others.

Each year a special event is held by the Association of Fundraising Professionals to honor those who impact our community on a daily basis without want of reward, recognition or return.

The West Florida Chapter announced the nominees for this year due to their philanthropic community efforts. They include: The Ambersley Foundation; Audi Pensacola; Baptist Health Care; Terry Berling; Randy Bricker; Carol Carlan; Madrina Ciano; Cross Faith Church; Escambia County Council of PTA/

PTSAs; Junior League of Pensacola; Levin Rinke Realty; David Lorenzo; Harold Marcus, Jr.; David Peaden, II; Pen Air Federal Credit Union; Michelle Salzman; Sunday's Child; and Todd Torgersen.

This may just be a list of names to those lending an ear, but to me and my constituency this list is comprised of organizations and individuals who lead by example, inspire those around them and leave a lasting impact on our community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to congratulate these individuals and organizations on their selfless acts of giving, and to thank the National Philanthropy Day Awards for hosting a day to honor individuals who give all but ask for nothing in return.

HONORING DELPHINE METCALF-
FOSTER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Delphine Metcalf-Foster, upon the occasion of her selection as the National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

Ms. Metcalf-Foster is the daughter of a U.S. Army veteran and a graduate of Vallejo High School, Solano Community College and Sonoma State University. She served with the U.S. Army Reserve, 689th Quartermaster Unit, 6253rd Hospital Unit, 6211th Transportation Unit and at Letterman Army Medical Center. Ms. Metcalf-Foster was injured during her service in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in January 1991. She retired after 21 years of dedicated service.

As the new National Commander of the DAV, Ms. Metcalf-Foster will represent nearly 1.3 million disabled veterans. Her duties include traveling around the country to speak at conferences, meeting public officials and advocating for our veterans. She will serve in this position for one year. She has already visited the Sam Houston Training center for medical personnel in Texas, where she was stationed in 1996. She lives by the DAV motto, "I'm here to serve my fellow veterans." Ms. Metcalf-Foster is the first woman and first African-American woman to serve as National Commander.

In addition to her new duties, Ms. Metcalf-Foster will continue to volunteer with the VA Clinic on Mare Island. Vallejo, California Mayor Bob Sampayan has proclaimed November 18, 2017 "Delphine Metcalf-Foster Day."

Mr. Speaker, the Disabled American Veterans have selected Delphine Metcalf-Foster as their National Commander. As a disabled combat veteran, myself, I am proud to represent a constituent who works hard to serve our veterans. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

NORTHERN INDIANA AREA LABOR
FEDERATION COMMUNITY LABOR
AWARDS RECEPTION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to congratulate several of Northwest Indiana's finest citizens. The Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation, American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL—CIO), recognized several individuals and organizations for their dedication and service during the Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation Community Labor Awards Reception, which was held at Wicker Park in Highland, Indiana, on Thursday, November 16, 2017. These individuals, in addition to all Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation members who have served Northwest Indiana so diligently for such a long period of time, are the epitome of the ideal American worker: loyal, dedicated, and hardworking.

At this year's event, several individuals and organizations received special recognition. State Representative Linda Lawson was the recipient of the Service to Labor Award for her many years of support to the labor movement and her outstanding dedication to union members.

The Union Labor Award was presented to Dan Waldrop, retired Business Manager, IBEW Local 697, for his unselfish devotion to the labor movement through its promotion in all areas: social, civic, educational, and political.

The Honorable Joe Stahura, Mayor of Whiting, Indiana, was recognized with the Community Services Award for his exemplary work on behalf of his community and to the enhancement of the quality of life for residents and visitors of Northwest Indiana.

Larry Regan, Teamsters Local 142, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of labor activism and his commitment to his community. For the exceptional service he has provided to the people of Northwest Indiana, he is worthy of our admiration and respect.

Guy Seydel, Boilermakers Local 374, and Ross Gluth, Roofers Local 26, were presented with the George Meany Award for their significant contributions to the youth of their communities through their involvement with the Boy Scouts of America.

The President's Award was presented to Chuck Jones, USW Local 1999, for his dedication to the labor movement and his noteworthy service to the organization. Chuck is worthy of the honor bestowed upon him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating these dedicated, honorable, and exemplary citizens, while commending all of the hardworking union men and women throughout America. They have shown commitment and courage toward their pursuits, and I am proud to represent each of them in Washington, DC.

RECOGNIZING THE JACKSONVILLE
CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY AND
THE POLICEMAN'S BALL

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Jacksonville, Illinois Citizens Police Academy (CPA) Alumni Association, as they celebrate their 6th annual Policeman's Ball to honor the brave members of the police force in our community.

Since 1999, the CPA has recruited and trained citizens to join their alumni association, which provides assistance to the Jacksonville Police Department and the community at large. Throughout the year, members of the alumni association assist the Jacksonville Police Department with traffic control, parking for events, and park patrol.

Every year, the CPA Alumni Association host the Policeman's Ball to honor all Central Illinois' policemen and women. The Policeman's Ball is a celebration of the dedication and service our brave policemen and women give to our community. This year, the CPA is recognizing Jean Jumper, the Executive Director of the West Central Mass Transit District, with the Civilian Community Service of the Year Award. Under Jean's leadership, West Central Mass Transit found a way to keep buses running when the Illinois state government was unable to provide funding. I am grateful for her service to West Central Illinois and her community.

I extend my sincere congratulations to the Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association on their years of service and applaud the efforts to recognize the sacrifice of Central Illinois officers with the 6th annual Policeman's Ball.

HONORING LARRY JOE MILLER
(1943–2017)

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the life of Larry Joe Miller, artist-in-residence for the City of Hollywood, Florida. Larry served our nation in the United States Air Force where he earned a distinguished record of overseas service.

A true renaissance man, Larry was renowned for his music and art. He was known in South Florida as "Mr. Rockabilly" from his 50 years as a touring musician. During his touring days, he played with several popular bands, including the Thingies, Larry Joe Miller and the Rockabilly Rockets, and the Delusions. He was a lifelong artist who delighted Hollywood residents and all who visited.

As artist-in-residence, he hosted weekly community art events, including classes for students in need and his famous "Paint for Fun" nights, which allowed hundreds of South Florida residents to paint for free in Hollywood ArtsPark.

Above all, Larry was a beloved husband and father who impacted the lives of all who knew him. He is survived by his wife Amy; his sons Clay, Tyler, John Paul (Shelli), and Dennis (Stacy); and his grandchildren Aradia, Olivia, Phoenix, Owen, Quinn, Jessica, and Jason.

The City of Hollywood and the entire South Florida family lost an icon who will be sorely missed; however, I am confident Larry Joe Miller's legacy will live on through his work and the lessons he taught so many in our community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FOOD AND
FARM ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Congress will once again take up the Farm Bill—a massive piece of legislation governing U.S. agricultural policies that is debated every five years. The Farm Bill affects everything from human health to the environment, from our national debt to the price of a gallon of milk. I've long argued that it is one of the most important bills that Congress regularly considers.

Time and time again, I've watched big agriculture businesses dominate Farm Bill negotiations, with the voices of those who care about small and mid-sized farmers, conservation, research, and healthy food drowned out. Frustrated by the process, I've spent the past two years asking Oregon's farmers and ranchers, people in health care, nutrition, conservation, food processing and distribution, local government, and education, what they think the Farm Bill should look like.

There is clear consensus that Congress really can do better when it comes to our nation's food policy, but that will require a stronger, more unified approach.

Today, I am introducing an alternative Farm Bill, the Food and Farm Act. My bill follows four key principles to reforming our nation's food policies—focusing resources on those who need it most, fostering innovation, encouraging investments in people and the planet, and ensuring access to healthy foods. The legislation gets rid of certain expensive and inefficient subsidy programs so they can't be abused by wealthy agribusinesses. It also doubles funding to support environmental protection, invests in helping new and socially disadvantaged farmers, and ensures animals are more humanely treated.

I'm looking forward to continuing the conversation in the coming months to make sure that Congress sets a food and farm policy that works for everyone.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAJOR WIL-
LIAM "BILL" J. GOLEMBIEWSKI

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Major William "Bill" J. Golembiewski for his exemplary dedication to duty and service as an Army Congressional Fellow and Congressional Budget Liaison for the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller). Major Golembiewski is transitioning from his present assignment to serve as an operations officer for the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, The Old Guard.

A native of Southern California, Major Golembiewski was commissioned as an infantry officer after his graduation from California State University, Fullerton with a Bachelor of Science degree. He also has a Master's degree in Legislative Affairs from the George Washington University.

Golembiewski has served in a broad range of assignments during his Army career. He served as the Alpha Company and later as the Heavy Weapons Airborne Platoon Leader for the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vicenza, Italy. As the Heavy Weapons Platoon Leader, Major Golembiewski deployed to Afghanistan in 2007. After his tour, Major Golembiewski was assigned to Southern California, where he served as the operations officer for the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion—Southern California and later commanded the Riverside Company in the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion.

In 2012, Major Golembiewski left for his second deployment to Afghanistan where he commanded the Bravo Troop, 6–1 Cavalry of the 1st Striker Brigade Combat Team. After two successful company command assignments, he served as an operations officer for the 1st Striker Brigade, 1st Armor Division. In that assignment he was nominated and selected for the U.S. Army Congressional Fellowship Program.

In 2015, as an Army Congressional Fellow, I had the privilege of working with Major Golembiewski in my office for a year and during his subsequent assignment as a Congressional Budget Liaison for the U.S. Army. Major Golembiewski worked tirelessly with Members of Congress and their staffs to accurately articulate the Army's budget positions to the Appropriations Committees. His professionalism, diligence, and commitment to the mission are unmatched, and his work both as a fellow and as a liaison very effectively represented the U.S. Army and the Department of Defense to the United States Congress.

The foundation of Major Golembiewski military success is his family. He is a devoted husband to his wife, Ginger, and committed father to his daughter, Sienna, and his son, Grant. The Golembiewski family's commitment to this nation is a testament of the Army's values. They best exemplify the spirit of selfless service, and their care for others permeates in every aspects of their lives.

Throughout his career, Major Golembiewski has positively impacted soldiers, peers, and superiors. Our country has benefited tremendously from his extraordinary leadership, judgment, and passion. I join my colleagues today in honoring his dedication to our Nation and invaluable service to the United States Congress as an Army Congressional Liaison.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a genuine pleasure to have worked with Major Bill Golembiewski over the last three years. On behalf of a grateful nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending Bill for his service to our country, and we wish him all the best as he continues his service in the United States Army.

SALUTE TO C.A.R.S. RACING FOR A CAUSE

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, on December 10, 2017, C.A.R.S. Racing for a Cause, Inc. will hold its final Charity 200 race event after twelve years of helping children and families who are facing serious and terminal illness in Central Florida.

C.A.R.S. Racing for a Cause Inc. was founded in 2006 by Carla, Amanda, Rick and Sara Bristol of Orlando, Florida. That is what C.A.R.S. stands for. At that time Rick, a lifelong racing enthusiast, met a family with a child suffering from leukemia. Wanting very much to help this little boy, who was an avid fan of monster trucks; Rick used his contacts in the racing industry to pull together a 200 lap charity truck race and raised about \$6500 to help this little boy and his family pay for his treatments.

Since then C.A.R.S. Racing for a Cause has been helping families in need hosting a number of charitable events throughout the year which culminate in one big racing weekend event called the Charity 200. Every year C.A.R.S. board of directors selects two or more families with serious medical needs and dedicates the year's events to raising funds to help them through difficult times.

In 2012, Rick enlisted the help of friend and NASCAR Truck Series winning driver Joey Coulter, and parents Joe & Susan Coulter, to help grow and promote the Charity 200 race weekend. Working together, Rick and Joey have raised over \$275,000 to help 30 Florida families to date. At the conclusion of this year's event, 33 families, and over \$300,000 will have been raised and distributed to help those in need.

This year, C.A.R.S. will be helping Gianna Palazzolo, a six year old girl from Bartow FL, who was seriously injured in a car accident; Kaitlynn Swanbeck of Auburndale FL, age sixteen and has a serious back disease; and Shaunna Posey-Cajigas of Titusville FL, a twenty-seven year old mother with a five year old son who is battling stage 4 thyroid cancer.

Special thanks also go to Don Nerone & Robert Hart who allowed Rick to begin the Charity 200 event at Orlando Speedworld in 2006. In 2012, the event was moved to Auburndale Speedway where Rex and Colette Guy, Ken & Charlotte Hyatt donated the use of the facility, paid the insurance and helped grow the event each year.

Rick and Joey have had the following board members along with Rick's family these 12 years: Butch and Barbara Pierce, Chad and Nicole Pierce, and Eric Reynolds. They have all labored with love to help children and families facing these diseases and tough times. Many other loyal friends and family have volunteered to help make all these events possible.

Their mission has been "And of some have compassion, making a difference." Jude 22.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting C.A.R.S. Racing for a Cause, and all those who have helped make their events successful.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH M. DEFFNER

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize and honor the life of a dedicated husband, father, mentor, and community leader from The Woodlands, TX: Joseph Michael Deffner.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Joe Deffner spent his early years in Louisiana before moving to The Woodlands and becoming a true Texan.

As a child, Joe was a member of the Saint Edward the Confessor Church Cub Scout Pack 496 in Metairie, Louisiana. Many years later, Joe imparted this love of scouting to his own three sons: Justin, Brett, and Jackson, who remained active in scouting throughout their teenage years.

Ultimately, Joe dedicated ten years of his life to the local scouting program at St. Simon and Jude's Catholic Church, in The Woodlands, TX, including a three-year stint as the Scoutmaster of Troop 204, one of the largest troops in the Tall Timbers District.

Devoted to the advancement and leadership development of his sons and the many scouts under his leadership, Joe personally led three scout trips to High Adventure Bases across the country, and under his guidance, thirty-two scouts attained the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest achievement in the Boy Scouts of America. Joe's hard work and dedication was rewarded in 2014, when he was recognized as the Tall Timber District's "Outstanding Scout Leader".

In addition to his community involvement, Joe built a successful career in finance. Highly respected in his field, Joe's career led him to work for industry giants, such as Citi Global Commodities, Amaranth, Enron Corp, and UBS. In 2013, Joe filled a new role as the Managing Director of HPS Investment Partners LLC in Houston, TX.

Joe's dedication to his wife, Lisa Bills, and his sons, Justin, Brett, and Jackson provides a stellar example of a loving husband and father—an example that deserves to be recognized and emulated by all who hear of his story. I am certain that Joe's entire family, including his mother and father, Mary and Joseph; his sister, Cheryl; his niece and nephews, Maia, Liam, and Aidan; his mother-in-law, Donna; and brothers-in-law, John and Eric will sorely miss his quick wit and lively personality.

It is my honor to join Joe's family, friends, and the entire community of The Woodlands, TX, to recognize Joe's lifetime of dedicated service. Joe passed away on November 7, 2017, and he will be truly missed.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SECURING DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FIREARMS ACT OF 2017

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, in January 2010, the Department of Homeland Security

(DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) reported that 289 firearms issued to DHS officers were lost between fiscal years 2006 and 2008. While some reported losses were due to circumstances beyond the control of DHS officers, the majority of the losses occurred because firearms were not properly secured. The OIG identified that the lack of Department-wide firearm policy was a major reason why firearms were not secured.

In October 2017, the OIG reported that despite DHS's efforts following the 2010 report to establish enhanced controls and monitoring, personnel still did not properly safeguard firearms and other sensitive assets. Specifically, DHS reported that between fiscal years 2014 and 2016 the Department lost a total of 228 firearms, 1,889 badges, and 25 immigration stamps. The OIG reported that 57 percent of the reports of lost firearms and sensitive assets that it reviewed involved officers who did not properly safeguard their sensitive asset and 23 percent of the reports did not include sufficient detail to determine whether the office properly safeguarded the asset. The October report detailed ongoing problems within DHS that contribute to failures to safeguard firearms and sensitive assets, including insufficient tracking and recording mechanisms, insufficient guidance over badges, and poor oversight and enforcement policies.

The Securing Department of Homeland Security Firearms Act of 2017 ensures that the Department establishes effective safeguards and controls over firearms and other sensitive assets that are issued to DHS officers. This legislation requires the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to develop a Department-wide directive for achieving adequate security over firearms and other sensitive assets across the Department. The directive must include requirements for securing Department-issued firearms and other sensitive assets and reporting and recordkeeping requirements for lost firearms or sensitive assets. Moreover, this bill mandates that heads of DHS components provide personnel with training and guidance on how to adhere to safeguarding requirements and, in the event a firearm is lost or stolen, how to properly report the loss or theft.

RECOGNIZING RON GOLDSTEIN

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a good friend and great educational leader in Eastern Connecticut, Mr. Ron Goldstein, who is stepping down after a long and distinguished career on the Board of Education in the town of Colchester, CT.

Mr. Goldstein is a local hero in Colchester. He was raised in the town, graduated from Colchester's Bacon Academy in 1985, attended Brandeis University and obtained his law degree from Harvard. In 1992, Mr. Goldstein returned to his native Colchester and made his home there. Shortly thereafter he was recruited to serve in town government by the former first selectwoman and my former district director, the late Jenny Contois. He began on the town's Charter Adoption Commission and spent the next 24 years serving

the town in various positions, including 16 years as a member of the Board of Finance and eight as the chairman of the Colchester Board of Education. He is a tireless champion of quality education and is deeply committed to his community. Mr. Goldstein is also on the Boards of the Colchester Library, the Collaborative for Colchester's Children, and the Colchester Community Theatre. He's even performed in several plays. Ron is a man of deep faith and active at his synagogue, Colchester Ahavath Achim.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me particular pleasure to praise Ron's record, because I am a Democrat and Ron is a Republican and yet we never once over the 12 years I have known him ever discussed town or national issues through the lens of party politics. His focus has always been what's best for Colchester and our nation. That, Mr. Speaker, is exactly the kind of public service our nation needs and his example is an inspiring one, particularly at a time when politics and government are facing a crisis of confidence in the public at large.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please rise to thank Ron for his years of dedication to the Colchester community. Although his leadership as chairman of the Board of Education will surely be missed, I am confident that his commitment to Colchester will continue in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMP LEE

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize the 50th Anniversary of Camp Lee in Anniston, Alabama.

The original campsite was purchased in 1930 by the Choccolocco Council, Boy Scouts of America, and maintained as a boy scout camp from 1931 to 1965 as Camp Zinn. This site was selected by General R.E. Noble and C.H. Young, Sr. for the Choccolocco Council. General Henry Zinn, who died in 1924, willed \$10,000 for the purchase of the property.

As a result of the Boy Scouts' purchase of a new campsite in Dekalb County, Camp Zinn was for sale. On August 11, 1966, the Official Board of the First United Methodist Church accepted a gift of 1,000 shares of Phelps Dodge Corporation common stock from Mr. Arthur H. Lee, who the camp would later be named for.

At a September First United Methodist Church Anniston Quarterly Church Conference, a loan of \$65,000 was authorized to purchase Camp Zinn from the Boy Scouts. In February of 1967, a loan was secured with the stock that Mr. Lee had given the church. The loan was satisfied and the stock redeemed.

At the time of purchase, the camp consisted of just the dining hall and kitchen, Green Lodge, the Guest House and several old tent sites and out-houses. In addition to the original buildings, the main lake across from the dining hall and the one-acre lake in Village 2 were already at the camp.

Since the purchase, the cabins, pool, additional lodges and roads have been built. Several other properties have been added to the

camp since 1966 including Holly Springs Baptist Church property, the Kiker House and Lee Farm area. Camp Lee now consists of 382 acres.

Camp Lee provides a facility for those who seek Christ in an outdoor environment.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Camp Lee.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. RUBIE ELLA NIXON SCHUMPERT

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great South Carolinian and accomplished educator who will celebrate her 100th birthday on November 22nd.

Mrs. Rubie Ella Nixon Schumpert is the third of nine children born to Mr. Sumter Nixon and Mrs. Ella Bell Suber Nixon on November 22, 1917. She received her elementary education in South Carolina and Maryland, and her high school education at Harbison Institute in Irmo, South Carolina where she was class valedictorian.

She attended Barber-Scotia and Benedict colleges and obtained her Masters of Education degree from South Carolina State College. She did further studies at Wake Forest University and the University of South Carolina. Mrs. Schumpert earned certification in six areas of study: Elementary Education, Social Studies, English, Mathematics, French and Counseling.

Mrs. Schumpert began her professional career in Lexington County, South Carolina, where she served as an elementary and high school teacher, head teacher and elementary school principal. Later in her career, she worked in Richland County School District One at C.A. Johnson High School as a guidance counselor and was chair of the Math Department. While at C.A. Johnson, Mrs. Schumpert co-authored a mathematics textbook through a federal grant for non-college bound students through the University of South Carolina.

She recorded television lessons for the U.S. military to help young soldiers achieve success in algebra courses. She also served on Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) committees evaluating schools across the state of South Carolina. Upon retiring from the District One School System, Mrs. Schumpert worked at Benedict College as a professor of mathematics for ten years. She has long been active in the community serving on numerous professional and civic organizations.

Mrs. Schumpert was married to the late John Barton Schumpert, and they had two daughters, La Verne S. (Alphonso) Bassard and LaMaris S. Mack. She also has four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I began my professional career as a classroom teacher in the public schools of South Carolina, and I have always revered the profession of educator, especially those at the grade school level. I am honored to pay tribute to this great educator, Mrs. Rubie Ella Nixon Schumpert and ask that you and my colleagues join me in wishing her a happy 100th birthday.

OUR PILGRIMS PRIDE

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a poem, on behalf of Albert Carey Caswell, to honor the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families on this Thanksgiving holiday.

OUR PILGRIMS PRIDE

Our Pilgrims pride
In this Thanksgiving time
All across our country side
As our Nation takes the time
To so look deep down inside
And reflect and give thanks for this year
gone by
As we thank our Lord God on high
And the men and women of
The Armed Forces and their families who
fight and die
For all our freedoms to provide
Holding our families to our sides
We give thanks for all our lives
And the freedom and peace upon which our
Nation relies
As a great feast of thanks is prepared by our
loved ones upon which to dine
While, the fire places proving such warmth
inside
As all across our Nation out at football
games we cry
As we give thanks as we reflect back at the
Pilgrim's pride
Who for their blessings so took the time
But, some families on this holiday will never
be close
With one less seat at the dinner table to host
Who over the years have lost their precious
loved ones who meant the most
Who fought on battlefields of honor from
coast to coast
While, others sit around the dinner table
without arms and legs and eyes
All because of that magnificence which
burns deep down inside
While, thousands of miles away,
heroes are separated from their loved ones in
harms way
Whose mommies and daddies can't be home
today
For all of us,
to them and their families we give thanks
this day
All so the price of freedom can be paid
So this Thanksgiving hold your family close
And remember what means the most
And give thanks to all of those
The Magnificent men and women and fami-
lies of The Armed Forces defend us so
On this day our Pilgrim's Pride of thanks we
give all of those

HONORING TIMOTHY J. FARLEY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Timothy J. Farley upon the occasion of being recognized by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education with their annual leadership award.

Mr. Farley was born on a military base in Europe and was raised in Martinez, California. He earned his associate's degree from Diablo Valley College and his bachelor's degree from

the University of California, Davis. He was elected to the Martinez City Council in 1990 and reelected in 1994. He is currently the Director of Community and Government Relations for Saint Mary's College in Moraga, California.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) recognizes two individuals from across the country for their outstanding advocacy work on behalf of educational institutions. CASE is honoring Mr. Farley for his work and leadership in elevating the profile of Saint Mary's College among California legislators and staff. Mr. Farley's colleagues praise him for having excellent communication skills and for building first class partnerships and an effective community relations program.

In addition, to his work at St. Mary's College, Mr. Farley is dedicated to community service. In 1978, the Martinez Chamber of Commerce honored Mr. Farley as Young Man of the Year for "Outstanding Contribution to the Community." He was appointed to the United States Electoral College in 1996. He has written a public affairs column for the Martinez-Pleasant Hill Record. He is the founder of the Luncheon Society, a public affairs roundtable. Mr. Farley is a longtime advocate for veterans and nontraditional students.

Mr. Speaker, Timothy J. Farley is very deserving of this recognition by virtue of his leadership, commitment, and passion for service. I am proud to have such a man working and living in our community, and I'm honored to call him my friend. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING COLONEL CHARLES D
(DAVE) JONES, USAF (RET)

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of Colonel Charles (Dave) Jones of Medical Lake, Washington.

Colonel Dave Jones has lived a life of service. A Veteran of Vietnam, Korea, and World War II, Col. Jones answered his nation's call, served valiantly, and has made a tremendous impact. In World War II, as a commander of the 340th Training Battalion, he was responsible for ensuring that our airmen were trained to effectively and safely serve their country in the skies over Europe. An officer in the United States Air Force, he served as commander of Fairchild Air Force Base and retired here in Spokane in the 1970s.

Colonel Jones continued to be an active and important member of the Spokane community. Among his numerous activities, Colonel Jones served as a member of the Lilac Festival Board of Directors and was instrumental in bringing the Expo '74 to Spokane. Colonel Jones and his wife Margaret have been active in the local veterans community, helping to illustrate the unique issues faced by veterans in Eastern Washington.

Colonel Jones once challenged me to be a part of the 5 percent of any organization who gets the job done. This is the example he set for all of us.

Colonel Jones is a man we admire, and we owe him our gratitude for his lifelong contributions to our nation and to Spokane.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE ROTARY CLUB
OF CHILLICOTHE, OHIO

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's 15th Congressional District to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Chillicothe, Ohio.

From its founding at the Clinton House Drug Store in 1917, countless members of our Chillicothe community have been called by the Club's motto "Service above Self," and desired to spread goodwill to their neighbors.

The Club initially focused its energy on supporting the efforts surrounding World War I, such as the sale of Liberty Bonds, but soon was able to expand its efforts to improve other communities. In the early 1920s, the Chillicothe Rotary Club was essential in installing clubs in Ironton, Portsmouth, Washington Court House, Wellston, Circleville, Jackson, Lancaster, Logan, Nelsonville, and Greenfield. The impact of this organization throughout the 15th District is immeasurable; like a pebble dropped in a pond, the ripples are far-reaching.

Over the past century, the Chillicothe Rotary Club has been involved in numerous initiatives and projects benefitting their community. From purchasing books for the Chillicothe Public Library in the 1940s, to supporting the building of a YMCA facility in the 1960s, fundraising for PolioPlus in the 1980s, and building a handicap accessible shelter house in the 2000s, the Chillicothe Rotary Club has made our Southern Ohio community a better place.

Today, the Chillicothe Rotary Club hosts an annual Pancake Day, supports students and advisors involved with Junior Achievement of Ross County, and provides many scholarships to area youth. I am extremely grateful to have all those involved for their continued efforts.

Again, I wish to congratulate President John O'Connor and the entire Chillicothe Rotary Club upon this historic milestone, and convey my most sincere appreciation for their ability to place "Service above Self."

COMMEMORATING CENTRAL
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR RE-
CEIVING THE NATIONAL BLUE
RIBBON

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor Central Catholic High School in Bloomington, Illinois for receiving the U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon.

Since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has awarded the Blue Ribbon to schools across the country based on their overall academic excellence. This year, 342 schools across the nation were awarded the National Blue Ribbon, including Central Catholic High School. Central Catholic High School prides itself on their academic excellence and a proactive student body. As an institution rooted in Catholic values, Central Catholic is

committed to reinforcing the principals of Christian service, responsibility to the community, and respect for life.

Additionally, Central Catholic High School was named one of the most academically challenging schools in Illinois by the Washington Post in 2017. Led by Principal Sean Foster, the faculty has developed an effective curriculum to meet the academic needs of all students which prepares them to pursue higher education and professional careers.

It is an honor to represent the students, faculty, and administrators at Central Catholic High School. Their dedication to education, and their students, makes them a deserving recipient of the National Blue Ribbon, and more importantly, an example for schools all across the nation.

REMARKS AT THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to include in the RECORD these remarks I recently made to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights:

I'm standing with Chairman Castro from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in a village called Taholah. It's the lower reservation of the Quinault Indian Nation. The nation's President, Fawn Sharp, takes us up a slight incline as we look out at the Pacific Ocean. "When I was a kid," she says, "The ocean was a football field's length away. Now it's our front porch."

She explains that her village has been there since time immemorial. But in recent years, it has begun to see the threats of rising sea levels and more severe storms—not to mention the threat of tsunami. She points out that village is below sea level—which wasn't a problem in past generations. But now, on numerous occasions, the sea wall has breached and their village has filled up like a bowl.

That story—and the stories of the four other tribes in my district that—as we sit here today are in the process of trying to move to higher ground—deserves to be heard. And it is why I'm grateful to Mr. Castro and to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights for listening.

Billy Frank, a Native American civil rights icon, provided vital direction to those who needed to be heard, who wanted to advocate. He would say, "tell your story, tell your story." Storytelling is essential for change.

But in order for change to happen, someone needs to hear that story, and listen to the people telling it. Too often, there is no one listening when communities of color or disadvantaged populations tell their story. That's why the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is so important. For 60 years, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has listened. And they've detailed, in sharp focus, the inequity tribal communities across the nation face, in addition to many other injustices.

In a 2003 report called *The Quiet Crisis*, they showed our government's systemic failure to live up to its treaty obligations with tribal communities. I am grateful for the work they're doing to update that report.

I want to tell you another one of the stories we heard. One of the tribal leaders

shared his story. He said, "Do you want the good news or the bad news?" I said, "Let's hear the good news!" He said, "Every one of our high schoolers graduated this past year." I said, "So what's the bad news?" He then shared that, for the first time, the state of Washington was requiring that students take the state mandated exam over the internet. He said, "We don't have high speed internet." He said, "We tried a sample test. We shut down every computer in the school except two." It's one of those exams where you answer ten questions and then click next page. He said, "We tried it. It took a minute and 44 seconds to get to the next page." So that's not going to work.

Sadly—that tribe, too, is not alone. Many of the coastal tribes lack the basic broadband that many of us take for granted. It doesn't just create a barrier to first responders, and to folks who want to start a business, or to kids who need to pass a test. It's a civil rights problem.

According to the FCC approximately 63 percent of Tribal land residents lack access to strong broadband. Only 17 percent of the rest of the nation faces a similar challenge.

This isn't the only challenge tribal communities face. We know they have a higher rate of substance abuse issues than the general population, they have lower graduation rates, they have underfunded schools and police forces and many areas lack the economic development opportunities necessary to provide families with a quality income.

These are real problems, and too often these communities are ignored. But the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is listening. And they're amplifying quiet voices.

I am pleased with the fact that the Commission is working on an update to the Quiet Crisis Report. When it's completed, it can provide a roadmap for Congress and for the Administration to address problems that are too often unnoticed. And the Commission is listening to other communities too.

Your work is a big part of the reason a hate crimes bill recently passed out of the House Judiciary Committee. And your reporting is driving the House's discussion on voting rights.

So let me just end by saying thank you. Thank you all for having me today. Thank you Dr. Hayden and the Library of Congress for curating such a powerful exhibit. On behalf of my constituents, and on behalf of everyone else who is telling their story. Thank you.

And to the Commission—Thank you for listening. Thank you for shining a light on injustice and disparity. And thank you for working to ensure that our nation keeps its promise to all of its citizens.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ST. HELENA STAR AND NAPA VALLEY VINTNERS TASTING PANEL

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the St. Helena Star and Napa Valley Vintners Tasting Panel upon the occasion of their 10th Anniversary of informing wine lovers with thoughtful information about Napa Valley wines.

In 2007, David Stoneberg from the St. Helena Star, Terry Hall from the Napa Valley Vintners and Stefan Blicher from Blicher, Pierce and Wagner Wine created the Tasting

Panel. Each month, the 20 to 25 person panel hosts a wine tasting and judging. This community tradition has helped journalists and the wine community build stronger relationships.

In March 2017, the Editor & Publisher, a trade publication for the newspaper industry, recognized the Tasting Panel in their article, "10 Newspapers that Do It Right." This article praised the Tasting Panel for creating "a better way to report on the wines they were recommending to readers."

The Tasting Panel has held more than 100 tastings of Napa Valley wines. The articles that journalists write about these tastings help consumers learn about wine and appreciate the hard working winemakers in our community.

Mr. Speaker, the St. Helena Star and Napa Valley Vintners Tasting Panel has been providing quality information to our community about Napa Valley wines for the past 10 years. I am proud to have such a great tradition to showcase the best wine in the world. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor them here today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed a vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 636.

HONORING THE LIFE AND MILITARY SERVICE OF BROUGHTON HAND

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of World War II veteran Broughton "Brodie" Hand who passed away on October 27, 2017 at 97 years of age.

Brodie was born in 1920 to Baptist minister, Rev. and Mrs. L. J. Hand. Brodie, the middle son out of 5 boys and 1 girl, came to Anahuac, TX in 1924. He attended Anahuac High School where he was voted Best All Around his senior year in 1939. After graduation, Brodie enrolled in Marshall College which is now East Texas Baptist University. When World War II began, Brodie felt the call to serve his country and left college to enlist in the United States Army on October 15, 1942. He volunteered for the paratroopers and went to jump training at Ft. Blanding, FL. After jump school he was assigned to the 508th Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division with C Company. He was shipped to Belfast, Ireland for more training and then to Nottingham, England where they were stationed at the foot of Nottingham Castle. Since the company was short on demolition sergeants, Brodie was trained for the job before he was shipped to France. On the night of June 5, 1944, Broughton Hand prepared to go to war.

The mission given to the 82nd Airborne when they landed in France was to seal off

the bridges on the Douve and Merderet Rivers. Problems started early when the planes ran into a fog bank that nearly made them run into each other. After veering from their planned flight pattern to avoid collision, the 82nd Airborne had to jump in an area far from the one they had prepared for. Brodie jumped from about 600 feet up and as soon as his chute opened he was landing in the tops of the trees. He managed to cut his chute loose and met up with other men in his company headed northeast. They came across Douve River where they attempted to blow the bridge, but could not due to increased German activity in the area. Brodie and his men were able to take three German's as prisoners, which would prove to save their lives. On June 9th, Brodie and his squad went back to blow the bridge, but instead ran into a German tank on the way. After running out of ammunition, Brodie's Lieutenant got one of their German prisoners to call out "we surrender" in German. Brodie spent the next 11 months as a Prisoner of War. He worked, as a POW, cleaning up bombed cities and working in coal mines. He was finally able to send a pre-typed postcard to his parents informing them that he was a POW over 70 days after his capture. On April 22, 1945, Brodie was at a hospital in Nuremberg, Germany recovering from a leg injury when General Patton's troops swept through the area returning him to American hands. Broughton returned to Anahuac, after the end of the war, and married Lillian, his wife of 66 years. Together they had three children, Phoebe, Myra and Lynn. Throughout his life, he worked as a salesman for different companies. Brodie upheld his civic duty proudly and stayed active in his community and church until his death last month. He was past Commander of the Texas Golden Triangle Chapter of EX-POWs, past Commander of the Disabled American Veterans, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a member of the order of the Purple Heart, and past Commander of the Freeman Spath Post 104 of the American Legion with continuous membership of over 70 years. He served on the Governor's Prisoner of War Advisory Committee, and was the Chambers County Veterans Service Officer for 13 years.

Broughton Hand lived a full honorable life devoted to his family, country and God. It is a privilege to have been able to represent such a person in my District. I want to extend my thanks to him and his family for their selfless service and will keep them in my prayers.

IN HONOR OF THE 91ST BIRTHDAY
OF JULIUS GRADY COX

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize the 91st birthday of Julius Grady Cox.

Grady was born to Annie and George Cox on December 3rd in Ayden, North Carolina. One of five children, Grady graduated high school at the age of 16 and joined the U.S. Navy as a medical corpsman in WWII. He was selected for Naval ROTC at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (API), now Auburn University, where he met his late wife Jean Ransom.

Grady earned degrees from API in Chemical Engineering and Mathematics and his doctorate in Industrial Engineering at Purdue University. Grady served at Auburn University as full professor, Dean of the College of Engineering and Executive Vice President.

Grady was also involved in the community and was a member of the Rotary Club, Civitan Club and Kiwanis Club. He is a member of Auburn United Methodist Church.

On December 3rd, he will celebrate his 91st birthday as well as enjoy "Grady Cox Day" in the City of Auburn, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Grady a very happy 91st birthday.

HONORING WOMEN'S
ENTREPRENEURSHIP DAY

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in honor of Women's Entrepreneurship Day which is celebrated around the world each year on November 19th. In honor of this day, I am introducing a resolution to recognize November 19, 2017 as "A Day in Honor of Women Entrepreneurs".

Women are majority owners of 9.9 million American businesses which generate \$1.4 trillion in annual sales and employ more than 8.4 million workers. Ninety-nine percent of women-owned businesses are small businesses, and 47 percent of all American minority-owned businesses are also women-owned. I applaud these women entrepreneurs and their economically-vital businesses.

Today, I also applaud Wendy Diamond who has personally spearheaded the Women's Entrepreneurship Day movement. Since her campaign launched in 2013, her Women's Entrepreneurship Day organization has funded 500 Syrian refugee girls in Jordan so they could attend high school, launched an initiative in Oman to empower women and girls to vote against arranged marriage, and partnered with a Uruguayan university to offer scholarships to young women. Women's Entrepreneurship Day is now celebrated in 144 countries and 65 universities and colleges internationally, with numerous global ambassadors. The Women's Entrepreneurship Day mission is to empower the four billion women worldwide to be catalysts of change, and uplift the over 250 million girls living in poverty around the world.

Tomorrow, Wendy will be hosting a Women's Entrepreneurship Day event in New York City at the United Nations in order to empower, celebrate, and support women and girls globally to alleviate poverty. Joining her for this amazing event will be: Mikaila Ulmer—12-year-old founder of Me & The Bees Lemonade and successful Shark Tank contestant on ABC; Jesse Draper—founding partner of Halogen Ventures; Dia Simms—CEO of Combs Enterprises and Board Member of the Harlem Boys and Girls Club; and Baroness Sandip Verma—European Union External Affairs Subcommittee Chair and Member of the House of Lords.

In addition to bringing these incredible women together, Wendy and her organization will be honoring the following individuals with the following awards:

Dottie Herman—Founder, President, and CEO of Douglas Elliman—Business Pioneer Award.

Lucy Jarvis—First woman television producer, Peabody Award winner—Media Pioneer Award.

Suzanne Lerner—President and Co-Founder of Michael Stars, Board Member of Women Thrive Alliance—Fashion Pioneer Award.

Sonia Gardner—President, Managing Partner, and Co-Founder of Avenue Capital Group and Global Chair of the Board of 100 Women in Finance—Financial Pioneer Award.

Bobbi Brown—CEO of Beauty Evolution and former CEO and Chief Creative Officer of Bobbi Brown Cosmetics—Beauty Pioneer Award.

Muna Rihana Al-Nasser—Chairwoman of the UN Women for Peace Association—Philanthropy Pioneer Award.

Judith Ripka—Luxury jewelry designer and founder of Judith Ripka—Accessories Pioneer Award.

Angie Bastian—Founder and Board Member of Angie's BOOMCHICKAPOO—Culinary Pioneer Award.

Sara Bareilles—Singer, songwriter, six-time Grammy nominee, Broadway musical writer and composer—Music Pioneer Award.

Andrea Kerzner—Founder and CEO of Lalela Project. Co-Creator of themoreweshare.com, and Director of the Board of Kerzner International Holdings—Artist Pioneer Award.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the entire House to recognize these remarkable role models, and to celebrate Women's Entrepreneurship Day this year and every year moving forward.

HONORING EVELYN JAVIER
CENTENO, RECIPIENT OF THE
AMERICAN DREAM AWARD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Evelyn Javier Centeno, whom I have selected to receive the American Dream Award. This award recognizes the achievements of immigrants in my district who have made remarkable contributions to California's 5th Congressional District communities in the areas of Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, or Community Service. Ms. Centeno exemplifies these attributes and is very deserving of this award and recognition.

Ms. Centeno was born in Manila, Republic of the Philippines and immigrated to the United States in 1971. Prior to leaving Manila, she earned a degree in Chemistry from the University of Santo Tomas. She earned three more degrees after moving to California. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from Golden Gate University, and she earned her Master of Science degree in Education from Chapman University. Ms. Centeno is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Inspire Learning Institute, a nonprofit organization for educational empowerment.

Prior to founding Inspire Learning Institute, Ms. Centeno worked in the fields of engineering and education. Through her leadership, Inspire Learning Institute established a free

science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) summer camp and after school STEM enrichment programs. Since March 2013, they have served 2,000 students in Contra Costa County and disbursed \$10,000 in scholarship funds.

In addition to her work with Inspire Learning Institute, Ms. Centeno is an active member of her community in Martinez, California. She is a member of the East Bay Leadership Council, founder and past president of the Filipino American Democratic Club, former president of the Martinez Citizens Oversight Committee and a former member of the Contra Costa Mental Health Commission.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize Ms. Evelyn Javier Centeno for her achievements and for enriching our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor her here today with the American Dream Award.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor An Achievable Dream, which will be commemorating its 25th anniversary this weekend.

An Achievable Dream was founded by the late Walter Segaloff, a local community leader, businessman, and humanitarian. His ambitious public-private educational partnership in Newport News, Virginia started small but has grown exponentially in the last 25 years.

When An Achievable Dream first opened its doors in 1992, it was a small summer and after-school tennis and tutoring program for 95 fourth graders. A year later, the program more than doubled the number of students it served to 200 rising fourth and fifth graders. In 1994, An Achievable Dream expanded even further by becoming a full-time, extended day school for 400 children in grades three through five, and in 1994 they started serving grades six through eight at Dunbar Erwin Middle School. Five years later, in 2000, An Achievable Dream Academy was founded as a year-round, full time elementary school and by 2007 they opened a separate, full-time middle and high school. Since those early years, An Achievable Dream has grown beyond Newport News and now has partnerships with Virginia Beach City Public Schools and Henrico County Public Schools.

The motto of An Achievable Dream is "Teaching Kids Winning Ways." The Achievable Dream program is structured to give young people the skills needed to succeed in life. Those skills are taught at An Achievable Dream on the tennis court, in the classroom, on field trips, and in sharing experiences with successful and caring adults in the community.

One of the things that makes An Achievable Dream so impactful on the lives of the young people it serves is An Achievable Dream's ability to show the boundless opportunities available if you just make the right choices. The staff, supporters and sponsors at An Achievable Dream have worked over the last 25 years to ensure that their students graduate on time and have an opportunity to go to college.

An Achievable Dream has not achieved all of this on its own. Walter Segaloff understood that it took every facet of the community—including school leaders, public officials, law enforcement, the military, and businesses—to work together toward the common goal of making better the lives and educational outcomes of as many young persons as possible. I would like to thank each of the community organizations and businesses for stepping up and helping make An Achievable Dream the success that it is today. I would also like to thank our military for volunteering regularly with these students for An Achievable Dream's character development program. And of course, I want to thank Kathy Edwards, President and CEO of An Achievable Dream, and all the faculty and staff who have dedicated their careers to these young people.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have been involved with An Achievable Dream as a supporter since its beginning. As our community gathers to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the An Achievable Dream at the annual Tennis Ball gala this weekend, I look forward to the continued success of An Achievable Dream. I would like to congratulate the staff, supporters and sponsors at An Achievable Dream on a quarter century of success and I look forward to witnessing their many continued successes in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS WATER PROJECT STREAMLINING ACT OF 2017

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my legislation, the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Indian Affairs Water Project Streamlining Act. As my constituents know all too well, communities across the western United States are often faced with the detrimental impacts of droughts and water shortages. In states where the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) hold jurisdiction for the development of water projects, communities are left waiting due to a lack of a streamlined process. These communities need BOR and BIA to accelerate studies and provide more accountability in the agencies' processes to study the feasibility of new or expanded surface water storage, water recycling, and rural and Title XVI water projects. This legislation will streamline BOR and BIA's environmental planning and study process for these water projects and ensure that communities in the West can address the critical need for water supplies that continue to grow with demand.

In order to meet existing human and environmental needs, we must update current water supply infrastructure. This legislation applies the same streamlined water project development process used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which was established under the "Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014," to BOR and BIA's processes for surface water, storage, infrastructure, and recycling project development. This legislation will improve both water storage and

conservation infrastructure, as well as the reliability of our vital water supply for communities across the nation. A dependable supply of water is an indispensable resource in the West—from farming and ranching, to recreation and municipal uses, to manufacturing and wildfire response needs, this resource truly is vital. Conducted in concert with improving stream flows, protecting headwater areas, rebuilding fish runs, and boosting continued conservation efforts, this streamlining effort will provide great relief for my constituents and constituents across the western United States.

In addition, the legislation authorizes several key water development projects across the West, including projects in California, Kansas, Montana, as well as my home state of Washington. One of these is the third phase of a vital effort in my District in Central Washington, the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project. The Yakima River Basin is one of the leading agricultural regions in Washington State and throughout the country. However, the demand for water in the region currently exceeds the resources available, especially during times of drought, which have hit the state especially hard in the past few years. After years of tough negotiations, the Yakima River Basin Plan is a model of collaboration that offers a solution to give water users more certainty, while also recognizing the concerns of conservationists and the various stakeholders in the Yakima Basin. The authorization of this project is vital for my District, just as water projects are in states across the West. This legislation will allow the next major step to addressing our water crisis to become a reality.

This commonsense bill reforms the current cumbersome and lengthy process so that there is a mechanism to build new water and infrastructure projects in Central Washington and across the west. I welcome all members to join me in supporting this legislation, and I urge its swift passage through the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

COMMEMORATING CHIP HALBACH'S RETIREMENT

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Chip Halbach's retirement in September of 2017 after 30 years of service with the Minnesota Housing Partnership.

Chip has long been an advocate for affordable housing for Minnesota residents. In 1987, Chip founded Minneapolis Housing Partnership (MHP). MHP convenes, guides, and supports a diversity of partners working to improve conditions of home and community. Initially, MHP's focus was informing housing groups and partners on pending legislation. MHP evolved to become a major provider of technical assistance and financial support to increase the capacity of organizations building and developing affordable housing. MHP has served as an intermediary for the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Seeing the need to bring together the affordable housing community, Chip Halbach

started the Homes for All Coalition. The Homes for All Coalition is a statewide coalition that works to provide safe, stable, and affordable housing for people across all income levels. From working to increase rental subsidies, to improving infrastructure at manufactured housing parks, and resources for first time homebuyers, Homes for All is tackling the diverse range of housing issues facing Minnesotans.

Chip is widely known for his encyclopedic knowledge of federal and state housing programs, sophisticated housing finance tools and their history. Policymakers and elected officials have often drawn on Chip's wealth of knowledge and expertise in the affordable housing field. Many have cheekily quipped, "before 'Google' there was Chip Halbach."

Chip Halbach's leadership has helped shape legislation, provided education, and secured money to create safe, decent, affordable places for families and individuals to live. His steady leadership leaves the Minnesota Housing Partnership poised to move forward in tackling our affordable housing crisis. I want to thank Mr. Halbach for all his years of service. His presence will be missed, but his contributions will not be forgotten.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. LAURA DIXIE

HON. AL LAWSON, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Laura Dixie, one of Tallahassee, Florida's foot soldiers in the Civil Rights movement, who passed away on Saturday, November 11, 2017 at the age of 92. Laura Dixie was a civil rights trailblazer, and played a crucial role in the Reverend C. K. Steele's quest to desegregate Tallahassee's public transportation system in 1956. She also worked with Reverend Steel and others in the original 1962 lawsuit calling for the desegregation of Leon County Schools.

Laura saw early in life that obtaining civil rights was going to be challenging. One of her favorite stories was about going downtown one day with her parents and seeing water fountains marked for "Whites only, and Colored only."

Life took Laura from sampling water on a dare, from a segregated Whites only fountain inside the Leon County Courthouse, "to see if it was sweeter;" to playing a pivotal role in the Tallahassee Bus Boycott. She traveled during troubled times to Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia to participate in Voter Registration drives; to seeing a black man elected President of the United States. It was one of her proudest moments to see President Obama in the White House.

In the early 1950's, Laura joined her husband Samuel L. Dixie at Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, where together they worked closely with the church and in the community to promote Civil Rights. Her involvement in Tallahassee's Civil Rights movement went along with her active membership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Inter-Civic Council in Tallahassee and the NAACP, of which she was a life member.

At the time of her death, Laura lived in the house that she and her husband owned since

the mid50s on Tanner Drive in Jake Gaither Park. They often found room in their house to help Florida A&M University students in need of a place to live when their funds were depleted.

Mr. Speaker, Laura Dixie was simply a trailblazer and an icon, who fearlessly battled the horrors of being a black woman in the south during desegregation. Laura Dixie's spirit and attitude will be truly missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE RUSSELL

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, in connection with official business, I was unable to attend votes on November 15, 2017.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 635; and YEA on Roll Call No. 636.

100TH BIRTHDAY OF CARL BURGER

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th birthday of Carl Burger of Williamsburg, Ohio.

In 1917, the first World War still burned in Europe. But in small town America, William and Emily Burger were welcoming Carl Burger to the world, and to Ohio. With the exception of several exceptional years in service to his country, Carl has lived in Williamsburg, Ohio for his entire life.

On the occasion of Carl's birthday, I'd like to tell you a bit about where one hundred years of a remarkable life has taken him.

In Williamsburg, Carl was many things. A formidable basketball player, a talented drummer, an employee in the family meat market. He left Williamsburg for the first time when he volunteered for the army in 1941, before the United States entered the Second World War. He was months away from completing his service, and returning to Ohio, when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Carl knew in that moment that he'd be in the war for its duration.

I cannot speak directly for Carl's wartime experience. But his story is one of humanity, humility, and humor. He served as 3rd Infantry medic in North Africa, and throughout the Italian campaign. While serving on the front lines, he had more than a few close calls with torpedoes, artillery, and enemy patrols. Carl is keenly aware of a sense of luck, or a touch of providence, that guided him through these incidents largely unharmed.

While Carl surely saw enough of the war to last him a lifetime, he also witnessed great bravery, and he rose to great bravery in return. He was awarded the Bronze Star for directing the evacuation of 58 wounded GI's from the front lines of Italy. His experiences taught him that courage can be found in funny places—a shared bottle of contraband whiskey, or an unexpected foxhole visit from a general.

Ultimately, like every veteran, Carl's service is only a part of his story. He was still a young

man when he returned to Williamsburg. He returned to his father's meat market, and the town band. He married and had children. He has a long history of participation in fraternal organizations like the Masons, and youth service organizations like the International Order of Rainbows for Girls.

His talent as a grill-master is legendary, as is his generosity and spirit.

Mr. Speaker, Carl Burger is a good man, and he's lived one hundred years worth celebrating. I hope you'll all join me in wishing him the happiest of birthdays.

HONORING MR. ELIOT SEIDE

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. Eliot Seide, for his thirty-eight years of public service to the citizens of the Fifth Congressional District, to the 43,000 members of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 5, and to the great state of Minnesota. Mr. Seide was the first in his family to attend college, graduating Phi Beta Kappa from New York University. In graduate school, Mr. Seide realized that he was tired of talking about making a difference and decided it was time to take action.

Mr. Seide's father Julius, was a leader of the Printers Union in New York City. Eliot followed in his father's footsteps when he went to work for AFSCME and its President, Jerry Wurf, in 1979. Mr. Seide came to Minnesota in 1980. He was central to helping state employees in AFSCME Council 6 wage a successful strike in 1981. He worked to strengthen AFSCME in local government in the Twin Cities metropolitan area by helping form AFSCME Council 14 in 1982. Over the next 12 years, Mr. Seide was instrumental in building power for working people in Minnesota and improving the quality of public services in Minnesota through a strong and progressive labor movement.

In his thirty-eight year career with AFSCME, Mr. Seide has fought hard for a better Minnesota for everyone. He worked his way up in the union, serving in many capacities as field representative, legislative director, international area director, and as Executive Director of both AFSCME Council 14 and AFSCME Council 5.

In 2004, Mr. Seide became the executive director of AFSCME Council 5, one of the largest unions in the state of Minnesota. In 2006, Mr. Seide was also elected AFSCME International vice president. Governor Mark Dayton has shared these words about Mr. Seide: "He's a tireless advocate for his members, and he has that New York edge to his style but believes fiercely in doing what's right for his members."

The state of Minnesota will long remember the work of Mr. Eliot Seide as a leader of not only Council 5, but for all Minnesotans around issues of fair taxes, decent wages, responsible investments in transportation, clean water, a strong education system, and healthy families. He believes deeply that we all do better when we all do better. I thank Mr. Seide for his many years of service to Minnesotans.

IN HONOR OF LTC MICHAEL
MANNING

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Lieutenant Colonel Michael Manning of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our Nation. Colonel Manning will soon transition from his current assignment as the Rhode Island Army National Guard Liaison to serve as the Battalion Commander of the Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion.

Colonel Manning began his military career as Distinguished Military Graduate of Providence College's ROTC Class of 1997. He then deployed to the Republic of Germany with the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.

He subsequently deployed to Kosovo in support of Operation Joint Guardian II as a Brigade Reconnaissance Troop Leader for Task Force Falcon. In 2002, after joining the Rhode Island Army National Guard, he was appointed Commander of the 173rd Infantry Detachment Long Range Surveillance, which was mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III in 2004. He again deployed, this time with Special Operations Detachment Global, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom Caribbean and Central America in 2008, where he served as the Deputy Chief for the Regional Engagement Branch.

He then graduated with distinction from the College of Naval Command and Staff at the U.S. Naval War College with a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies before once again deploying with Special Operations Detachment Global, serving with the Senior Special Operations to the Afghan Ministry of Defense. Having served as an Assistant Professor of Military Science at Providence College and as a State Partnership Program Coordinator, he continues to impart his wisdom to those around him as the current Secretary of the General Staff.

As the primary liaison between the Rhode Island Congressional delegation and the Rhode Island Army National Guard, Colonel Manning has provided me and my staff with the ability to better comprehend and appreciate the National Guard and its unique mission set both at home in the Ocean State and in Washington, D.C., his first-hand knowledge of the military, its culture, and its traditions has been of tremendous benefit.

Throughout my time working with Colonel Manning, I found him to be a thoughtful, intelligent, and dedicated Soldier in the best traditions of those called to serve from the great state of Rhode Island, and his future is extremely bright.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure to work with Colonel Manning during his time as a National Guard Liaison in Rhode Island. On behalf of a grateful Nation, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service and sacrifice of Lieutenant Colonel Michael Manning, his wife, Meg, and their children, Michael, Jack, and Shannon. I wish them the very best as they continue their journey in the United States Army National Guard and thank them for dedicating their lives to the service of our Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on November 6, 2017, I missed Roll Call vote No. 607 and No. 608 on the floor of the House of Representatives. Had I been present, I would have voted yea and yea.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FRANK
ADELMANN

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Mr. Frank Adelmann. I join his family and friends to celebrate his life and honor his legacy.

Frank was born as the second of four children on March 16th, 1958, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. When he was three years old, his family moved to the suburb of St. Anthony where he would spend the rest of his life. He had a deep interest in his family history, and he often contacted his older relatives for information and reached out to his extended family. He was named after his grandfather, and he shared a birthday with his grandmother, Anna.

Frank excelled academically, and he attended college at both Hamline University and the University of Minnesota. He used his accounting skills in several purchasing and retail positions throughout his life. When he wasn't working, Frank dedicated his time to an eclectic set of interests and hobbies. He was a gifted pianist; he was well-read, often immersing himself in the Scripture; he had a playful sense of humor; and he taught himself Arabic.

Those who knew Frank consistently point to his uncanny ability to befriend the unusual, the lonely, and the hurting. Though he lived a private life, he held many close friendships, and

he was respected and liked in his community. He was also involved in his community; Frank attended many local caucuses and reached out to elected officials. Without a doubt, his care and consideration for people led to his understanding of the importance of civic engagement.

Frank Adelmann led an outstanding life, highlighted by his love of his family and his care for his community. To honor the legacy of Frank's life, I introduced the Frank Adelmann Manufactured Housing Community Sustainability Act. This legislation would offer a tax incentive to manufactured home park owners who sell the property to their residents, offering residents the long term stability they deserve to build long lasting community.

RECOGNIZING THE 2017 NATIONAL
SINGING CONVENTION

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, this weekend the State of Alabama will host the 2017 National Singing Convention in my home county of Winston County. This event will take place in Houston, Alabama on November 16-17 at Houston Baptist Church. The convention this year will be under the leadership of the 2017 president, Mr. Dylan Feezell.

Southern Gospel Music is often referred to as America's music. Gospel music gave rise to bluegrass and country music. The importance of gospel music is honored each year with the National Gospel Singing Convention.

The National Gospel Singing Convention first began in 1936. In the eight decades since its inception, the National Singing Convention have played a major role in the development of gospel music in America and around the world. The first convention was also held in Alabama, in the city of Birmingham.

I am proud to have this convention in the district I represent, the Fourth District of Alabama. This annual convention is not only an opportunity to fellowship and to promote gospel music, its main purpose is to exalt and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I use this occasion to emphasize the fact that Southern Gospel Music has made a tremendous positive impact on America and our nation's music. It continues to thrive and it make an impact on our communities, our culture and our faith.

Furthermore, I want to congratulate Mr. Dylan Feezell and the officers for their leadership of this year's convention in Houston, Alabama and wish them the best on a successful weekend.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2810, National Defense Authorization Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S7269–S7312

Measures Introduced: Twenty-five bills and nine resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2136–2160, S. Res. 335–342, and S. Con. Res. 30.

Pages S7296–97

Measures Reported:

S. 1591, to impose sanctions with respect to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 2099, to provide for the management by the Secretary of Agriculture of certain Federal land.

Page S7296

Measures Passed:

Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act: Senate passed H.R. 4374, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize additional emergency uses for medical products to reduce deaths and severity of injuries caused by agents of war.

Page S7270

Reaffirming the commitment of the U.S. to Cambodia: Senate agreed to S. Res. 279, reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S7308–10

McConnell (for McCain) Amendment No. 1586, to acknowledge the contributions of nongovernmental organizations in Cambodia.

Pages S7308–10

Drive Safer Sunday: Senate agreed to S. Res. 337, designating November 26, 2017, as "Drive Safer Sunday".

Page S7310

Commending and congratulating the Houston Astros: Senate agreed to S. Res. 338, commending

and congratulating the Houston Astros on winning the 2017 Major League Baseball World Series.

Page S7310

National Runaway Prevention Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 339, designating November 2017 as "National Runaway Prevention Month".

Page S7310

3d Infantry Division 100th Anniversary: Senate agreed to S. Res. 340, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 3d Infantry Division.

Page S7310

Conference Reports:

National Defense Authorization Act: Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year.

Pages S7276–78

Pro Forma Sessions—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, November 17, 2017 at 11 a.m.; Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 11 a.m.; Friday, November 24, 2017 at 11 a.m.; and that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, November 24, 2017, it next convene at 4 p.m., on Monday, November 27, 2017.

Page S7310

Friedrich Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Dabney Lanhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Page S7275

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 93 yeas to 4 nays (Vote No. 279), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S7276**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that all post-cloture time on the nomination be yielded back; and that Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, November 27, 2017. **Page S7278**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 4 p.m., on Monday, November 27, 2017, Senate resume consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, with the time until 5:30 p.m., equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees; and that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Gregory G. Katsas, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, ripen following disposition of the nomination of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich. **Page S7310**

Katsas Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Gregory G. Katsas, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit. **Page S7278**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia. **Pages S7278–79**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S7278**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S7278**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 54 yeas to 43 nays (Vote No. EX. 277), Joseph Otting, of Nevada, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of five years. **Pages S7270–75**

By a unanimous vote of 96 yeas (Vote No. EX. 280), Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina. **Page S7278**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 96 yeas to 1 nay (Vote No. 278), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S7275–76**

Brenda Burman, of Arizona, to be Commissioner of Reclamation.

Joseph Kernan, of Florida, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

Guy B. Roberts, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Robert L. Wilkie, of North Carolina, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Robert Behler, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, Department of Defense.

Thomas B. Modly, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of the Navy.

James Thomas Abbott, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2020.

Colleen Kiko, of North Dakota, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 29, 2022.

James F. Geurts, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Rebecca Eliza Gonzales, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Robert H. McMahon, of Georgia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Irwin Steven Goldstein, of New York, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

Sean P. Lawler, of Maryland, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service.

Ernest W. Dubester, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2019.

Shon J. Manasco, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

Lisa A. Johnson, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia.

Routine lists in the Foreign Service.

Pages S7311–12

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Melissa F. Burnison, of Kentucky, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs).

John G. Vonglis, of New York, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy.

Linda Capuano, of Texas, to be Administrator of the Energy Information Administration.

Johnny Collett, of Kentucky, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

Michael K. Atkinson, of Maryland, to be Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard. **Page S7310**

Messages from the House:

Page S7295

Measures Referred:

Page S7295

Executive Communications:

Pages S7295–96

Executive Reports of Committees:	Page S7296
Additional Cosponsors:	Pages S7297–98
Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:	Page S7298
Additional Statements:	Pages S7293–95
Amendments Submitted:	Page S7308
Authorities for Committees to Meet:	Page S7308
Privileges of the Floor:	Page S7308
Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—280)	Pages S7275, S7276, S7278

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 5:45 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S7310.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Glen R. Smith, of Iowa, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Anthony Kurta, of Montana, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary, and James E. McPherson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Army, both of the Department of Defense, and Gregory E. Maggs, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of John C. Rood, of Arizona, to be Under Secretary for Policy, and Randall G. Schriver, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary, both of the Department of Defense,

after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

COAST GUARD READINESS

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard concluded a hearing to examine Coast Guard readiness, focusing on how far we can stretch our Nation's only multi-mission, military force, after receiving testimony from Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant, Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security; Lee W. Smithson, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director, Pearl; Etta Kuzakin, Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, King Cove, Alaska; and Guy A. Meadows, Michigan Technological University Great Lakes Research Center, Houghton.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee continued consideration of an original bill entitled, "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act".

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2070, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

The nominations of Scott W. Brady, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and Andrew E. Lelling, to be United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts for the term of four years, both of the Department of Justice.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 36 public bills, H.R. 4416–4451; and 2 resolutions, H.J. Res. 121; and H. Res. 625 were introduced.

Page H9424

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H9426–27

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2907, to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to develop and publish an all-of-the-above quadrennial Federal on-shore energy production strategy to meet domestic energy needs, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–413);

H.R. 2706, to provide requirements for the appropriate Federal banking agencies when requesting or ordering a depository institution to terminate a specific customer account, to provide for additional requirements related to subpoenas issued under the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–414); and

H.R. 4182, to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify probationary periods with respect to positions within the competitive service and the Senior Executive Service, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–415).

Pages H9423–24

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Rob Hughes, Broadway Presbyterian Church, Sedalia, Missouri.

Page H9379

Recess: The House recessed at 11:10 a.m. and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Page H9405

Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: The House passed H.R. 1, to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, by a yeas-and-nays vote of 227 yeas to 205 nays, Roll No. 637. Consideration began yesterday, November 15th.

Pages H9405–14

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: “To provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.”

Page H9414

H. Res. 619, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1) was agreed to yesterday, November 15th.

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Wednesday, November 15th.

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1114 North 2nd Street in Chillicothe, Illinois, as the “Sr. Chief Ryan Owens Post Office Building”: H.R. 3109, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at

1114 North 2nd Street in Chillicothe, Illinois, as the “Sr. Chief Ryan Owens Post Office Building”.

Page H9414

United States Capitol Preservation Commission—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker’s appointment of the following Members on the part of the House to the United States Capitol Preservation Commission: Representative Comstock.

Page H9414

Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority Leader, in which she appointed the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton of Washington, District of Columbia to the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission. And from private life: Mr. Kenneth B. Morris, Jr. of Orange, California.

Page H9414

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow, November 17th.

Page H9414

Senate Referral: S. 807 was held at the desk.

Page H9405

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate today appear on pages H9405.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yeas-and-nays vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on page H9413–14. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE RACE TO 5G AND ITS POTENTIAL TO REVOLUTIONIZE AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled “The Race to 5G and Its Potential to Revolutionize American Competitiveness”. Testimony was heard from Shireen Santosham, Chief Innovation Officer, City of San Jose, California; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

11 a.m., Friday, November 17

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Friday, November 17

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

House Chamber

Program for Friday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 10 a.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Aderholt, Robert B., Ala., E1589
 Babin, Brian, Tex., E1585
 Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E1581
 Blumenauer, Earl, Ore., E1581
 Boyle, Brendan F., Pa., E1589
 Brady, Kevin, Tex., E1582
 Brady, Robert A., Pa., E1579
 Burgess, Michael C., Tex., E1580
 Clyburn, James E., S.C., E1583
 Correa, J. Luis, Calif., E1582

Courtney, Joe, Conn., E1583
 Ellison, Keith, Minn., E1587, E1588, E1589
 Gaetz, Matt, Fla., E1580
 Graves, Tom, Ga., E1579
 Himes, James A., Conn., E1580
 Hudson, Richard, N.C., E1585
 Kilmer, Derek, Wash., E1585
 LaHood, Darin, Ill., E1581, E1584
 Langevin, James R., R.I., E1589
 Lawson, Al, Jr., Fla., E1588
 McMorris Rodgers, Cathy, Wash., E1584
 Meng, Grace, N.Y., E1586

Newhouse, Dan, Wash., E1587
 Posey, Bill, Fla., E1582
 Rogers, Mike, Ala., E1583, E1586
 Russell, Steve, Okla., E1588
 Scott, Robert C. "Bobby", Va., E1587
 Sessions, Pete, Tex., E1584
 Stivers, Steve, Ohio, E1584
 Thompson, Mike, Calif., E1580, E1580, E1584, E1585, E1586
 Visclosky, Peter J., Ind., E1579, E1581
 Wasserman Schultz, Debbie, Fla., E1581
 Wenstrup, Brad R., Ohio, E1588



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